

NEWS

THE FINE ARTS CENTER
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SPRING 2010

Director's Comments

Proud Papa

Every year there are numerous reasons for me to find a tall place, spread my arms wide, puff out my chest and shout just how proud I am of the students here. Could be what they are working on in their studios, could be a score on a test, could be an academic honor or one of their concerts, or their acceptance to a college or university—these students give the lie to those who say, “Well, kids nowadays just think about themselves all the time!”

To wit: The Haiti Benefit Concert held in our Recital Hall and lobby on Friday, February 19, and the Empty Bowls Project, held Saturday, February 27 at Coffee Underground in downtown Greenville. Both were heartfelt expressions of their concerns: in one instance, a natural disaster whose destruction and loss of life cried out to the world for aid; the other, our neighbors, caught in the destructive cycle of poverty, or crushed by the economy (or both), wondering where their next meal is coming from.



The Fine Arts Ramblers play at the benefit for the Haitian earthquake victims. L to R: Jim Campbell (Fine Arts Center Painting instructor); Bob Chance, Chair of the Art Department at Furman University; Phil Garrett, local painting and printmaker; Glen Miller, local painter and teacher; and Patti Brady, local painter and wife of Phil Garrett.

McKenzie Hendley and Kelly Wills, seniors in our Visual Arts program, came into my office after the Haitian earthquake and asked if they could do something for the victims. They told me not to worry, they would organize everything. They had a lot to organize: they wanted to have a concert and an art auction. That meant auditioning “acts,” selecting student art work, getting volunteers to work in the auditorium and in the lobby, talking with the technical staff about lighting and sound, arranging with the custodial staff for set up, take down and putting the school back together in time for Monday morning classes. As if this wasn’t enough—they had to do it twice! The first date was snowed out. It all ends happily. They raised \$2400 and gave it to The Red Cross for their efforts in Haiti!

Ross Redmon and Chelsea Waller, again, seniors in our Visual Arts program, in Ceramics, came and “asked” me—really they “told” me (ever so politely), that they’d like to create bowls in their class, sell them and donate the proceeds to Loaves and Fishes. They began making bowls in January, their friends in their class made bowls, they talked to other ceramicists (including their teacher Glenda Guion) across the upstate who made and donated bowls to them, former students came in and made bowls, and by the time they held the event at Coffee Underground on Saturday, February 27, they had over 200 bowls! I could not have been more pleased to fight my way through the crowd buying bowls to get my free bowl of soup—donated by Dana Lowie, owner of Coffee Underground, who also donated the space (her new Red Room)—and to stand in line to buy my bowls. They raised nearly \$2700 for Loaves and Fishes. I’m told by their Executive Director, Susan Douglas, that each dollar they receive is worth \$11! So, all of the students (and there were many who volunteered the bowls they turned, many who volunteered their time to help that Saturday) gave a gift of nearly \$30,000!

I’m proud of all of my students, proud of what they do, of what they stand for, and when someone says to me, “I just don’t know what this younger generation is coming to!” I tell them, “Why don’t you stop by and see The Fine Arts Center—you’ll see what they are coming to.” No, I’m not worrying about my future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross".

Empty Bowls Event Raises \$2,700 for Loaves and Fishes

The Fine Arts Center Clay Students began making ceramic bowls at the beginning of this school year. For six weeks the clay teacher, **Glenda Guion**, held an open studio for three hours after school on Thursdays for students to make bowls. Student co-chairpersons **Chelsea Waller** and **Ross Redmon** attended every open studio, contacted local potters to donate their works, and created the Empty Bowls poster. Over the course of five months over two hundred bowls were created and donated to the project. Coffee Underground in downtown Greenville sponsored the bowl sale and donated wonderful soup and bread. On February 27, 2010, in only three hours, the sale raised \$2,700 for Loaves and Fishes of Greenville, a food rescue group in that serves a wide range of people in need in our area.

A huge thank you goes out to **Dana** at Coffee Underground, all clay students, and potters who generously gave of their time and their bowls! Empty Bowls is a national event sponsored by potters and clay students. The goal of Empty Bowls is to “raise money to help organizations fight hunger, to raise awareness about the issues of hunger and food security, and to help bring about an attitude that will not allow hunger to exist.”

For more information on Loaves and Fishes of Greenville go to www.loavesandfishesgreenville.com/



Clay teacher Glenda Guion with student empty bowls co-chairs Ross Redmon and Chelsea Waller



FAC Clay students with teacher Glenda Guion (right) and Susan S. Douglas, Executive Director, Loaves and Fishes (left)

Ring It Up!

After last year's graduation, Paul Gillis, the long time representative for Jostens in this area stopped and asked if we had ever thought of having a Fine Arts Center ring. As we hadn't, we decided to survey the students, and all agreed they would love to have a ring from this school. So we began a design process that lasted several months as was headed by the school's Visual Arts Department, particularly Jim Campbell, not only our drawing and painting instructor, but a graphic designer of great imagination and skill. Several designs were considered and discussed and, finally, the signet ring design you see here was decided upon. We have to thank Paul Gillis and his son, John Paul Gillis, who convinced the Jostens people that what was designed would not work on an oval ring, it had to be circular.

So, on April 12 at 9:15 in the morning and 1:15 in the afternoon, John Paul will explain to our 10th, 11th and 12th graders what the process is to order a ring. He will also talk about the cost of the ring, what it's made of and have samples for students to see. Then, on the 21st of April, he will be taking orders for the entire school day seated at a table in our lobby.

We hope you are as excited as we are about this new step we are taking to make The Fine Arts Center even more of a presence in the lives of our students. We know how important they consider their rings to be, we just hope that once they see this ring they'll recognized that its simple elegance is a demonstration of what they have learned with us.



- In December, *The New York Times* published a feature article on violinist **Kelly Hall-Tompkins'** Music Kitchen project. Music Kitchen is a philanthropic organization raising funds to aid homeless people and shelters in the New York City area. Many world-class artists have contributed their time and talents to Ms. Hall-Tompkins organization. Musicians also meet with, and perform for homeless people at the shelters and in churches. An aim of the organization is to develop the connection of homeless people to the community as a whole, and nurture that basic human need for art in our lives. Ms. Hall-Tompkins will also be a featured soloist with **Mark O'Connor** in his *Concerto for Two Violins* when they perform with several orchestras in the fall of 2010.
- Fine Arts Center voice alumna **Elizabeth "Betsy" Bishop** recently sang the major role of Amneris for the first time in the Atlanta Opera's production of Verdi's *Aida*. One critic wrote: "With the romantic leads stumbling, mezzo Elizabeth Bishop, as Amneris, easily became the opera's dominant voice. The clarity of her diction, the focus of her tone and her elegant sense of line made her Verdi interpretation a little closer to Rossini's lean bel canto than Puccini's succulent verismo. I like my Verdi that way. Bishop's anguish during Radamès' judgment scene, in the final act, was a highlight of the evening, vocally and dramatically." [Pierre Ruhe, ArtsCriticATL]. Retired FAC voice teacher **Michael Rice** attended the opening night performance and enjoyed time with his former student afterwards.
- **Fulton Burns** (FAC Dance 1988) has been awarded two grants from the University of South Alabama where he is an assistant professor. They are the Summer 2010 Arts and Sciences Professional Summer Development Award and the Spring 2010 Support & Development Award.
- **Kevin Boseman** (FAC Dance 1990) is performing with the National Tour of *The Color Purple*.



C R E A T I V E W R I T I N G

In December, both morning and afternoon Creative Writing students benefited from a two-day Master Class taught by University of Akron Press award-winning poet **Ashley Capps**. Capps' first collection of poems, *Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields*, was lauded by internationally recognized poet Gerald Stern for "their withering honesty, their modesty, their crazy imagination, and their cunning." Capps lead the students in a two day exercise designed to inspire the poetic imagination through surrealist juxtaposition of imagery and gave a reading in the Fine Arts Center's Black Box Theatre.

Junior **Jana Wilson's** two poems, "An Unkindness of Ravens" and "Redisuum," have been published by the magazine *Organs of Vision and Speech*. They appear online at www.ovsmag.com and are available as a PDF download or in print form from the magazine. Her poem, "I Weave the Clothes I Wear," is forthcoming with the online journal *Cliterature* in their issue on Family.

Senior **Geoffrey Billetter** has had another poem accepted for publication in a national magazine. His poem, "February," will appear in the online magazine *The Whistling Fire*.

Creative Writing Underclassmen have placed impressively at the regional level for the Scholastic Art and Writing Competition. Juniors **AJ Davis**, **Molly Frazier**, **Eric Roper** and **Andi Pardee** were awarded two Gold Key awards each for their poetry and short fiction. **Cara Sinicropi** and **Jana Wilson** were each awarded a Gold Key for their poetry collections and freshman **Kathleen Cole** was awarded an impressive three Gold Keys, two for individual poems and one for a short story. Their writing has been forwarded on to New York where it will be considered in the final round of competition for an award on the national level. Senior Portfolio awards are adjudicated separately, so information on their results is still pending.

In November, Instructor **Sarah Blackman's** chapbook, *Such A Thing as America*, was released by the *Burnside Review*, which will also publish her short story, "A Category of Glamour" in the forthcoming issue of their magazine. Her poem, "Tell Me About Your Changeling Daughter," was published by Forklift, Ohio, and a group of her poems were named as finalists for the 2010 Jeffery E. Smith Editor's Prize. They are forthcoming in *The Missouri Review* and their publication is accompanied by a podcast reading and interview forthcoming at www.missourireview.org. She was promoted to co-fiction editor of the online magazine of experimental prose, poetry and schematics, *DIAGRAM*, and was nominated for a Pushcart Prize by a member of the Board of Contributing Editors.

January 20 Percussion/Winds & Brass Recital: A Movable Feast With a Varied Menu

On Wednesday, January 20, students from the Percussion I, Percussion II, and Instrumental Chamber Music (ICM) classes performed a concert showcasing a wide variety of instruments, composers, and styles and periods of music. of particular significance was the ICM's premier of "What to Play?", a work composed for the Fine Arts Center by Dartmouth College masters degree student and FAC alumnus Alex Wroten.



Images by Thecla Tyner

Listen with Insight

March 26 at 7:00 pm in the Fine Arts Center Recital Hall, the Athena String Quartet will present Dmitri Shostakovich's *String Quartet #8*. **Dr. Jon Grier** will guide the audience through the biography of the composer and his most acclaimed piece of chamber music. With the quartet demonstrating some of the key events, melodies, and imagery in this dramatic work, the audience will be better able to listen with insight to the performance of the complete work that follows. The Athena Quartet is comprised of four accomplished senior students from the Fine Arts Center: violinists **Beth Uhimchuk** and **Sarah Leonard**; violist **Anna Catherine Bowden**; and cellist **Melissa Gaddy**. Dr. Grier is head of the school's Music Theory and Music History department. He is also an award-winning composer. If you've been afraid of concert music, or if you just want to understand what all the fuss is about, this is the show for you.

Fine Arts Center winds and percussion students have won chairs, by audition, in county, region, and state band festival competitions. These include:

Flutist **Merritt Huff** (Riverside HS): Region I Band, first chair; All-County Band, 3rd chair Wind Ensemble

Flutist **Amber Tepedino** (Mauldin HS): All-County Band, first chair Symphonic Band

Oboist **McKenzie Chelak** (Easley HS): All-State Band, first chair; Easley All-County Band, first chair

Timpanist **Wesley Strasser** (Wade Hampton HS): Region I Band, timpanist; Greenville All-County Band, Wind Ensemble timpanist

Mallet Player **Moses Andrews** (JL Mann HS): Region I Band, mallets (alternate); Greenville All-County Band, mallets, Symphonic Band

The county, region, and state band festivals will be held in various locations during the months of February and March.

FAC Composer in Residence **Jon Grier** recently traveled to hear performances of two of his chamber works. On January 20, the Ritz Chamber Players, a chamber music group based in Jacksonville, Florida, performed *Overcoming, A Rhapsody on We Shall Overcome* to an audience of 700. The piece is scored for 2 violins, viola, cello and piano, and was premiered in 2009 by FAC students; among the participating members of the Ritz Chamber Players was violinist and 1989 FAC alum **Kelly Hall-Tompkins**.

The Kandinsky Trio, longtime friends of the FAC based at Roanoke College, premiered the recently completed *Locriana*, for violin, viola, cello and piano (with the help of a guest violist) in concerts at Roanoke College and Virginia Tech on January 29 and 31. The first movement of this work was premiered by FAC students in 2008. Both of these performances were exceptionally rewarding experiences, and Jon spent a relaxing extra day in the mountains of central Virginia waiting for 14 inches of snow to be cleared from the roads!

Student News

25 Strings Chamber Music students won places in the SC All-State Orchestras festival. This represents the largest number of strings students chosen from any high school in the state. **Tony Abdelmalek** won the principal double bass position in the 11th-12th grade orchestra, while violinist **Beth Uhimchuk** won the assistant concertmaster position. **Anna Catherine Bowden** was named the assistant principal violist. **Preston Barbare** won the principal viola position in the 9th-10th grade orchestra. The SC All-State Orchestras performed at Furman University's McAlister Auditorium on February 28 led by **Jeffrey Grogan**, assistant conductor of the New Jersey Symphony, and **Kirt Mosier** from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. The SC Music Educators Association commissioned a new work from Mr. Mosier, *Awake to a Dream*, which featured significant solos for Preston Barbare and the other section principals.

Scholastics Art Awards

Visual Art students entering the Scholastics Art Awards 2010 had an impressive showing at Lander University in Greenwood this past December and January. Student artwork was selected by regional judges to be included in the exhibition, which is itself an honor, and from those exhibiting, award winners were chosen. Every Fine Arts Center department was represented this year:

Drawing and Painting students were **Eleanor Harmon**, **Elissa Von Walter** and **Kyle Sanders**, who earned a Silver Key Award, which denotes work worthy of recognition on the regional level. Students showing Metal work were **Caleb Hamby** and **Erin Stuart**. The youngest FAC participant was **Denzel Harrison**, a freshman, from the Design class.

Students from Photography and Ceramics departments did especially well this year, as **Kelley Wills** earned a Gold Key Award for her photography portfolio, and **Matthew Nielson** earned two Gold Keys, one for a ceramic vessel, and one for his portfolio of ceramic work. The Gold Key is considered highest level of achievement on the regional level, and these works will be forwarded to New York City for national adjudication. In addition, **Thomas Ross Redmon** earned not only a Gold Key Award for his ceramic portfolio, he also received the highest honor that could be earned at a Regional Scholastic Exhibition for his artwork, the American Visions Award. This award is considered a "regional best-of-show" and nominates him to represent this region in the national competition in New York.

The Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, the nonprofit organization that administers The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, states that during the 2010 program year, more than 30,000 students will be recognized in their local communities, and 1,000 students will receive National Awards. Students and teachers are celebrated at regional ceremonies, public events and the national ceremony at Carnegie Hall. Once competing at the national level, our Greenville student award winners will have the chance to win the \$10,000 in scholarships that are given to 15 graduating seniors who earn Portfolio Gold Medals and a select number of Portfolio Silver Medalists in the Art. An additional 400 seniors who earn Portfolio Silver Medals or Portfolio Gold Medals will leverage partial to full-ride scholarships from a network of 60 arts universities and institutes, which annually earmark \$3.9 million in financial aid.



*Matt Nielson,
"Vaulted,"
Gold Key winner*



*Ross Redmon,
"Ancient Vessel,"
American Visions winner*

T H E A T E R

The Fine Arts Center Theater Department would like to thank all of the parents who attended our organizational meeting in December. Your continued support is overwhelming; it has made and will continue to make a big difference in the way we function.

On March 4, our Beginning Theater Ensemble showcased their stupendous circus talents and hilarious, self-written commedia del arte scenes! Commedia, simply put, is improvisational, physical comedy at its best. We hope you enjoyed these original works by our morning class students!

March 20, students in the Theater II, III, and IV Honors classes will present their third quarter projects. These assignments will range from independent scene work to a voiceover reel to one-act plays by Tennessee Williams. Please come and support our actors.

Yet another Fine Arts Center student has made it to the big stage. **Lexi Aimé**, a senior who has studied in our theatre and voice departments, just returned from New York City and her debut at Carnegie Hall. As the only US high school student to win her division in the Barry Alexander International Vocal Competition, she performed an Italian aria and an Italian art song, sharing the program with professional opera singers from around the globe.

Prior to New York, Lexi spent a week in Miami as a NFAA YoungArts finalist, one of six singers chosen to participate. There she spent her days in masterclasses, performances, interviews and auditions. Her work culminated in being nominated as a Presidential Scholar of the Arts and the receipt of a \$3000 scholarship.

Currently, Lexi is in the midst of "audition season" for conservatory admissions. She has already been accepted at Oberlin Conservatory, with four auditions still in the wings. Good luck!

Vladislav Soldatenko, Artistic Director and Ballet Master of the Dance Department of the Ukrainian National Academy of Dance, taught a ballet master class to the afternoon dancers on December 7. Mr. Soldatenko completed graduate Master classes at the Vaganova Academy in St. Petersburg and performed as a soloist with Kiev National Theater of Opera and Ballet and Kiev Theater of Classical Ballet.

Wanda Ebright, Associate Professor of Dance at Johnson C. Smith University, visited the Fine Arts Center and taught modern dance master classes to both morning and afternoon dancers. Ms. Ebright who received her MFA from Florida State University, is also the director of her own dance company, The Wanda Project.

Dance Field Trip to League Academy

On January 27 the afternoon dancers traveled to League Academy (thank you to **Dirk Holleman** for driving the bus for us) to dance with the advanced 8th grade class. The dancers shared and discussed their choreography with each other. Several of the Fine Arts Center dancers had taken dance at League Academy with **Lynne Sargent**, so it was a great visit.

Choreography and Master Classes

On December 8, **Dr. Stephanie Milling**, Assistant Professor at Winthrop University, taught master classes to both dance classes at the Fine Arts Center. She will set a dance on the afternoon dancers during February, which she originally choreographed for dancers at Winthrop University. Dr. Milling earned her Ph.D. in Dance from Texas Women's University.

The second week in February, **Andrew Kuharsky** choreographed a new dance work for the morning dancers, which is titled "Comings and Goings". Mr. Kuharsky graduated from the esteemed National Ballet School in Canada, was an apprentice with the Joffrey Ballet in New York, a principal dancer with The Atlanta Ballet, and a soloist with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in Montreal.

Marcy Yonkey, Visiting Artist-in-Residence at Columbia College, will teach master classes to both dance classes on March 12. Ms. Yonkey received her MFA in Dance from Texas Women's University where she was the recipient of the 2008 Excellence in Teaching Award. She currently performs with The Power Company in Columbia, SC as well as teaching and choreographing at Columbia College.

Dance Class Lecture-Demonstration

The afternoon dancers performed their class demonstration, which included solos created by Dance III and Dance IV dancers (dancers who are in their third and fourth year at the Fine Arts Center). The lecture-demonstration for the morning dancers had to be rescheduled due to the weather and so was performed on February 3rd. The dancers showed what they do in class as well as their own compositional dance "studies."

Bake Sale

The morning dancers continue to organize and bake for their bake sale every Friday at 11:00. Look for the table before leaving the front of the building!

Saturday Dance Festival at the Fine Arts Center

The idea of a Saturday Dance Festival was formed and implemented by a former ARMES and FAC student, **Lauren Miller**, during her senior year last year. The event proved to be so successful that the afternoon dancers helped organize and run three Saturdays of dance this year. The intent of the all day workshops is to offer dancers the opportunity to take class with other dancers in the community who have a similar passion and interest in dance. Classes included modern dance technique, improvisation, repertory, Japanese dance, ballet and jazz.



FAC Performance & Special Events Calendar 2010

March 19 at 7:00 pm
Katie Rogers Benefit for the FAC

March 20 at 7:00 pm
Theatre Performance

March 24 at 7:00 pm
Jazz Concert, PM Class

March 26 at 7:00 pm
**“Listen with Insight” Lecture/Recital,
Shostakovich’s *String Quartet #8***

April 8 at 6:30
Generation to Generation, Visual Arts

April 14 at 7:00 pm
Jazz Concert, AM Class

April 16 at 7:00 pm
Strings Chamber Music Concert

April 18 at 3:00 pm
ARMES Strings Concert

April 22
**Fine Arts Center Student Juried Exhibit Reception, 6:30
pm**
Generation to Generation, Performance, 7:00 pm

April 27 at 7:00 pm
Spring Orchestras Concert

April 29 & 30 at 7:00 pm
“Independent Projects”

May 1 at 7:00 pm
“Independent Projects”

May 5 at 7:00 pm
Jazz Concert, PM Class

May 6 at 7:00 pm
Voice Recital

May 7 at 7:00 pm
Dance Recital
AP Visual Arts Portfolios Due

May 8 at 7:00 pm
ARMES Dance Recital

May 10
AP Music Theory Exam, 8:00 am
“Contemporary Theatre,” 7:00 pm

May 11 at 7:00 pm
ARMES Strings Concert @ WHHS

May 12 at 7:00 pm
Brass/Winds/Percussion Recital

May 13 at 7:00 pm
Strings Chamber Music Concert
Showcase Rehearsals

May 14
Showcases, 9:20 am & 1:20 pm
Anti-Prom, 8:00 pm
Last Day Seniors

May 15 at 7:30 pm
Young Artist Orchestra Concert @ Gunter

May 16 at 2:00 pm
Awards Day @ WHHS

May 17-21
ARMES Auditions

May 17
Philharmonic Awards Banquet

May 18 at 4:00 pm
Graduation Rehearsal @ WHHS
Young Artists Orchestra Awards Banquet

May 19 at 7:30 pm
Graduation @ WHHS

May 21
Last Day Underclassmen



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Dr. Phinnize Fisher, Superintendent

Fine Arts Center
Dr. Roy S. Fluhrer, Director
102 Pine Knoll Drive
Greenville, SC 29609

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