A+AH | Basel 2014

FIU | Art + Art History
College of Architecture + The Arts
Master of Fine Arts at Florida International University

MFA in Visual Arts

The Master in Fine Arts in Visual Arts has a post-studio approach to artistic practice but we do not jettison medium specificity all together. Students situate their practice in the context of the larger histories of various media while also getting a rigorous introduction to critical theory. We consider art making as inherently theoretical.

MFA in Visual Arts: Curatorial Practice Track

The MFA in Visual Arts: Curatorial Practice Track considers curating as an artistic practice. Just as a painter must paint, curators must curate to create new knowledge. To that end, students begin project managing exhibitions from the first semester, learning how to install, ship, pack, and light art. Also, students in this program are frequently in classes with studio artists, many of whose practices often include curating as well. Indeed, there is a blurring of the curator, critic, historian, and artist. Those enrolled in the curatorial practice track will get a rigorous introduction to not only critical theory but also the burgeoning field of curatorial studies.

The Master in Fine Arts in Visual Arts is a 60-credit program that is typically completed over 3 years as a full-time student. Students generally take three courses each term: an art history, an independent tutorial, and a graduate seminar, which meets once a week and includes students from all years and both studio and curatorial practice tracks. If requirements are met early, students can graduate as early as 2 years with faculty approval. Students can enroll part-time but are encouraged to take at least 6 credits per term to benefit the most from our program.

For more information, contact:
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Message from the Chair

On behalf of our faculty and professional staff, it is my pleasure to welcome you to our second issue of A+AH Basel. Through this publication, we are proud to show the involvement, talents, and creativity of our students, faculty, and alumni. Viewing our Art Basel issue will give you a taste of our programs at FIU and what our Department family has to offer the global community.

Jacek J. Kolasinski
Chair and Associate Professor

Jacek J. Kolasinski stands by his 3D fabricated work from Stadtluft Macht Frei (Urban Air Makes You Free) at The FIU Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum
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Photography by Jonathan Camere/Miami-Dade County/Courtesy of Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
MFA Candidates Present Work at Vizcaya-fy or Bust!

On Saturday, December 6th, 2014, Master of Fine Arts candidates and Master of Fine Arts: Curatorial Practice Track candidates exhibited their work at Vizcaya-fy or Bust!. The event at the almost one-hundred-year-old Vizcaya Museum and Gardens was a part of the museum’s Contemporary Arts Program (CAP) and showcased works that hit on the theme of adaptation and appropriation.

Vizcaya-fy or Bust! is best described by its official statement released by the museum: “Vizcaya-fy becomes a verb for the notion of rewriting history. Vizcaya’s creators liberally appropriated (borrowed pre-existing forms or images to form a new artwork) objects, images and ideas during the creation of the estate resulting in themes of originality, authorship, authenticity, pastiche, eclecticism and identity....These themes [of appropriation and adaptation] are also integral to Miami, begging the question: is Vizcaya so Miami or is Miami so Vizcaya?” (Source: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens)

The Master of Fine Arts candidates from FIU participated in these themes by displaying a floating exhibition in the museum’s pool. Entitled “The Love Barge,” the piece was created by MFA’s Susan Maas, Daniel Marosi, and Guido Mena, MFA: Curatorial Practice Track candidate Christopher Rodriguez Barake, and Mariele Capssa. The candidates reimagined Vizcaya’s Barge as an inflatable installation decorated with symbols and objects that represent Miami, such as dolphins, flamingos, seahorses, and lizards. The plaque at the installation stated about “Love Barge” that its “pastiche of symbolism underscores[d] the emblematic nature of Vizcaya and Miami.”

Additionally, the MFA’s exhibited a video installation in one of the side gardens that face the pool. The video was called “Pomp and Circumstance” and was created by MFA candidates Joe Locke and Kim Moore and MFA: Curatorial Practice Track candidates Danielle Damas and Brittni Winkler.

Another feature of the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens’ Contemporary Arts Program was its commission of seven local artists that included alumna Jillian Mayer (BFA ’07), Felecia Carlisle, Adler Guerrier, Brookhart Jonquil, Emmett Moore, Christina Peterson and Magnus Sigurdarson.
Vizcaya Museum and Gardens on Collaborating with FIU MFA Candidates

“CAP Lab, a new academic initiative, was a first experience for Vizcaya staff along with College of Architecture + The Arts MFA candidates. Co-creating this course with Professor [Jacek J.] Kolasinski challenged us to consider how to best present and support practical professional experience for emerging artists and arts professionals. We agreed early on that we would not lower the expectations for student outcomes; student proposals would be reviewed with the same scrutiny as the mentor artists. In turn, students did not lower their expectations for learning despite our role as partners and not professors. We appreciate the students’ patience and willingness to forge new territory together. Throughout a complex and demanding semester, students admirably rose to the occasion. We were pleased to observe them discovering lessons from success as well as disappointment. At times, we weren’t sure if CAP Lab was what students wanted in a course, but we were committed to offering what they needed: practical experience. Success was not defined by an artwork included in an exhibition, but through collaboration, reflective practice, critical inquiry, and skill development. This was also a rare opportunity for us to work with students over time. Typically, we encounter students once, during a group tour or one-time program. We thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the students and building a professional learning community. We hope that we have expanded the perception of Vizcaya as a museum to include developing and nurturing artistic practice.”
MFA Candidate Leandra Arvazzetti Collaborates with Chris Bosh

Photo Credit: April Belle Photos
Leandra Arvazzetti, Master of Fine Arts candidate at the FIU College of Architecture + The Arts, and two other artists collaborated with Miami Heat player Chris Bosh on launching his new fall collection of neckties and bowties, called Mr. Nice Tie. The unveiling of the tie line and Arvazzetti's work took place on Wednesday, December 3rd. The event included live music, a photo booth, food by Smoothies Candy and cocktails by Premier Beverage.

Bosh stopped by Little Haiti’s Yeelen Gallery to present works by artists Jerome Soimaud, Tim Okamura, and Leandra Arvazzetti. Arvazzetti made two pieces out of Bosh’s ties, one being a dress and the other, an installation. Okamura’s “Love, Strength and Soul” exhibition featured large-scale portraits of empowered African-American women in urban settings. Soimaud’s painting “I Am a Man” was a nod to relationships between fathers and sons. (Source: SouthFlorida.com)

“Collaborating with Chris Bosh and working with the Yeelen Gallery was an incredible experience,” said Arvazzetti. “It was a fun and rewarding project that also performed as a platform for future endeavors.” She has the FIU Art + Art History Department to thank for the chance to work with the NBA star. “This exciting opportunity would not have been possible without the support and networking opportunities provided by the MFA program at FIU.”
UNTITLED. Art Fair involves FIU CARTA in 2014 edition

Art Basel Week featured the culmination of the 2014 collaboration between UNTITLED, art fair and The FIU College of Architecture + The Arts (CARTA) Department of Art + Art History.

Master of Fine Arts candidates whose works were displayed in an Art Week exhibition at the College of Architecture + The Arts | Miami Beach Urban Studios were featured in a “mini documentary” that played in the UNTITLED. VIP lounge during its 2014 exhibition. Student video interviews allowed the artists to explain the works on exhibition and speak about their artistic process and theoretical framework.

Through this partnership between the FIU College of Architecture + The Arts and UNTITLED, CARTA aims to set itself apart as a national and global thought-leader in contemporary art and design, and as an institution involved in the local and international artistic and cultural communities through the work of its seven departments. The College also aims to position its Miami Beach Urban Studios, as Dean Brian Schriner put it, "as a global solution-center that utilizes the power of architecture and the arts to create, innovate, and inspire solutions to social, economic, and environmental problems."

FIU CARTA sincerely thanks Alan Randolph and Jeff Lawson of UNTITLED, for generously offering this opportunity for our students to be featured at one of the most prestigious art fairs.

This article was written with the help of Ashley Nicole Garcia, Coordinator, Advancement/Alumni Affairs at The FIU College of Architecture + The Arts.

MFA Thesis Show Exhibition Egress

Egress - the MFA Thesis Show that exhibited at Miami Beach Urban Studios during Art Week and that was featured at UNTITLED, 2014 - included the work of Fall 2014 MFA graduates Nick Gilmore (MFA ’14), Andrew Horton (MFA ’14), Joe Locke (MFA ’14), and Gardner Cole Miller (MFA ’14).

Images of their works can be viewed on the following page.

"Egress, MFA Thesis Exhibition" mini-documentary, as seen in the VIP Lounge of UNTITLED. 2014 Video by Manuel Perez-Trujillo and music by Amernet Quartet

To view, click here!
MFA Thesis Show Exhibition

Nick Gilmore (MFA '14)

Andrew Horton (MFA '14)

Joe Locke (MFA '14)

Gardner Cole Miller (MFA '14)
A+AH Students Participate in Art Week Fairs

Several FIU Art + Art History students took parts in the satellite fairs that took place during Art Basel week.

Some interned for the full week at SCOPE, the internationally known art fair that takes place on Miami Beach. Among the student volunteers were Juan Neira, Samannaz Kourang Pishdadi, and Grace Villalobos. Alumna Michelle Polissaint (BFA ’14) worked alongside these students at SCOPE as a photography intern.

At UNESTABLISHED, Brittni Winkler, Master of Fine Arts candidate in the Curatorial Practice Track, publicly performed “Creating Space: Creating Art with Yoga” for more than 200 people. On December 5th, 2014, the crowd viewed the performance at UNESTABLISHED, a non-profit organization, founded by Miami-Dade College film student Ashley Suarez-Burgos and freelance industrial designer Ian Duffy, that provides an exhibition space for young artists.

Brittni Winkler was inspired to perform “Creating Space” by the yoga studio she attends, Bala Vinyasa. She has been practicing yoga for seven years, and she felt that it was time to join this passion of hers with another - art. Winkler said that “this first live performance was only the burgeoning result” of this fusion.

“This was the first time that I ever opened my creative process to public view and officially announced myself as an artist, aside from...
“I particularly enjoyed the exhibition because it was a local show with several artists doing extremely different things. There were also no restrictions institutionally, so I was able to choose exactly where I wanted to do the performance and display my works.”

Andrew Horton (MFA ’14) was also involved in a satellite fair during Art Basel week. PRIMARY included a couple of Horton’s works in its International Friendship Exhibition. The exhibition “paid homage to the nature of contradiction, a concept ironically exemplified in the aforementioned kitsch-and-propaganda-filled pavilion in North Korea.” The title refers to Kim Jong-il’s gift pavilion of the same name. The exhibition focused on contradiction and both its place in society and society’s need for it. The International Friendship Exhibition was curated Books Bischof, Typoe, and Cristina Gonzalez of PRIMARY. (Source: PRIMARY)

Bischof explained how PRIMARY came to discover Horton’s work. “We were introduced to Horton’s work via Dimensions Variable,” said Bischof. “We really loved Horton’s energy, and the books Horton was installing into the wall caught our eye....Here at PRIMARY, we value relationships equally to talent, and Horton’s positive energy was something we appreciated. Horton is very intelligent, so when we decided to approach our Basel exhibit on the back of “contradiction” and shared with him our ideas revolving around the International Friendship Exhibition, we were excited about the direction he wanted to run in....”

“We were delighted with the book titles [Horton] utilized as his own personal narrative in approaching our group exhibit.” Bischof has high hopes for the now recent graduate from FIU. “We expect to see great things coming from Andrew Horton in the future.”
Faculty
Pip Brant Participates in Zones Art Fair and Meetinghouse

During Art Basel week, Associate Professor Pip Brant conducted a performance piece at Zones Art Fair and exhibited her work at Meetinghouse.

Her performance Rabbit Mountain Tango took place during the evening of Saturday, December 6th, 2014. Described by the artist as “an absurdist work,” Brant’s performance involved a ritualistic process, in which each audience member was invited to adopt a coconuts. Each coconut had a phrase with true scientific facts written on them, and each coconut was passed through a porthole in an eight-foot-tall black, domed “mountain” tent (see right image). Every time a coconut was passed through a porthole, puppets - inspired by those made by Paul Klee for his son - made of plaster and rabbit hides were shaken and waved. An accordion, a tuba, a trombone, percussion, and spoken word accompanied this performance.

At the new collective project and exhibition called Meetinghouse, Brant exhibited “Arizona Calvary and Stitch 2013,” a work from her Battlefield Re-enactment Series. The series hits on the phenomena of battle re-enactments produced by the losing side of a combat. Brant took this warring imagery and manipulated it and its colors to create a romanticized product.

“This action takes possession of these traditionally masculine narratives,” said Brant, “and erodes their truth into decomposed subversive echoes....”
Peggy Levison Nolan exhibits at Miami Project

Adjunct Faculty Peggy Levison Nolan’s photographic work was exhibited at Miami Project, in the Dina Mitrani Gallery booth.

Nolan is represented by the Dina Mitrani Gallery and has been since the gallery’s opening in 2008. Gallery owner Dina Mitrani, a former curator of what was once the Art Museum at FIU (now the FIU Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum) met Nolan during her curatorial work.

“Peggy was one of the first artists that I knew I wanted to have in my roster of artists, years before I opened the doors,” said Mitrani. “When I opened the gallery in November of 2008, she was one of the seven artists I inaugurated with. And she was the first solo exhibition in my gallery.”

Nolan seeks out the ordinary and photographs it when light hits it in just the right way, or when it contributes to her own storytelling. “I admire Peggy,” said Mitrani, “[and] her passion for photography, for looking, and for capturing life in her unique, poetic way.”
Primary Projects and Emerson Dorsch exhibit
Andrew Nigon

Adjunct Faculty Andrew Nigon exhibited his work in the International Friendship Exhibition at PRIMARY and in Cemeterium at Emerson Dorsch during Miami Art Week.

At PRIMARY, Nigon displayed “Dreaming of Popes IV.” The exhibition that included his work “paid homage to the nature of contradiction, a concept ironically exemplified in the aforementioned kitsch-and-propaganda-filled pavilion in North Korea.” The title refers to Kim Jong-il's gift pavilion of the same name. The exhibition focused on contradiction and both its place in society and society's need for it. The International Friendship Exhibition was curated by Books Bischof, Typoe, and Cristina Gonzalez of PRIMARY.
(Source: PRIMARY)

Nigon also exhibited “Death Hilarious” at Emerson Dorsch for its exhibition Cemeterium, curated and organized by Regina Rex. The exhibition featured over thirty artists, who were invited to present objects, installations, or performances on a four-by-eight-foot plot within a fifty-by-fifty-foot yard. Cemeterium blended elements of art fairs and cemeteries to highlight the longevity of an object beyond the run of the exhibition. Nigon’s sculptural installation contained a mixture of leftover and discarded parts from previous works. The piece emphasized the exhibition's theme of persistence and death. Joining him in the exhibition was FIU Art + Art History alumnus Daniel Clapp (BFA ’06).
At The FIU College of Architecture + The Arts
Miami Beach Urban Studios (MBUS), students are provided with an extraordinary base, located within one of Miami’s largest concentrations of galleries, music and theatre venues, architecture firms, and artist studios. MBUS provides access to a truly immersive experience with culture, innovation, artwork, and public discussion. MBUS invites students to fabricate work that rethinks issues, involves performative provocation, and collides the physical with the practical and the theoretical in a search for solutions.
Alumni
Omar López-Chahoud (BFA ’90) curates UNTITLED. Art Fair 2014

Omar López-Chahoud has been the Artistic Director and Curator of UNTITLED, Art Fair in Miami Beach, since its founding in 2012, and he will continue to lead the curatorial team of UNTITLED in 2015 after participating in its recent edition.

As an independent curator, López-Chahoud has curated and co-curated numerous exhibitions both in the United States and internationally. Most recently, he curated the Nicaraguan Biennial in March 2014. López-Chahoud has participated in curatorial panel discussions at Artists' Space, Art in General, MoMA PS1, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. He is currently a member of the Bronx Museum Acquisitions Committee.

After graduating in 1990 with a BFA from FIU, López-Chahoud earned MFAs from Yale University School of Art and the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

This article was written by Ashley Nicole Garcia, Coordinator, Advancement/Alumni Affairs at The FIU College of Architecture + The Arts.
John Bailly (BFA ’90) exhibits at Meetinghouse

A new collective project and exhibition called Meetinghouse featured alumna John Bailly (BFA ’90) in its roster of exhibitions.

Meetinghouse was a collective project and exhibition driven to create a visual dialog based on an appreciation of objects and object-making in several disciplines of the arts, architecture and design. Meetinghouse stressed the appreciation of time with an object and its inherent poetic narrative both as a viewer and as maker. Meetinghouse looked to past collectives such as Roycroft, Bauhaus and Shaker communities for context, guidance, and inspiration. (Source: Meetinghouse)

Bailly, represented by ClampArt, displayed some of his paintings at Meetinghouse. The alumnus said that these oil and graphite works were the start of a current theme of his. He said, “These works are intended to ask questions. Do aesthetics have an underlying mathematical order? Does nature have an underlying mathematical order? Does a human? Do cities? If there is a mathematical order, what scientific implications does this have? What metaphysical implications?” He concludes, “I ask questions. I have no answers.”
Ashley Garner (BFA ’13), Head of Exhibitor Relations at SCOPE: In Her Perspective

Ashley Garner (BFA ’13) is the Head of Exhibitor Relations at SCOPE Art Fair, which takes place each year at Art Basel week on the Miami Beach sand.

Ashley told A+AH Basel about her experience at SCOPE:

“I’ve been working with SCOPE for a little over a year now[,] I’m] going into my 5th show and the experience has been immensely rewarding. Getting the opportunity to understand how an art fair is built - starting with booking the galleries, placing them on the floor plan, curating the booths, and then the actual build of the show and break down - is something that has opened my eyes to understanding the making of an international art fair, especially one as reputable and innovative as SCOPE.

Our Miami Beach show in 2014 was especially exciting because of our collaborations with Kasheem Dean (aka Swizz Beatz) for The Dean Collection, Juxtapoz Magazine for the first ever debut of the New Contemporary in an art fair setting, and Feature | Korea. ..To see how a fair makes all of these special programs flow in a show is something that is essential to understanding clientele curation.”

When asked about her education at FIU Art + Art History, she said, “FIU helped me teach me how to break down the understanding of art through context, which is a crucial skill when working for an art fair.”
Message from the Editor

This is the second issue of A+AH Basel. Just like the last, it includes stories about the energetic involvement of FIU Art + Art History students, faculty, and alumni in 2014's Art Basel week activities.

To see such dedication and leadership coming from FIU makes me proud to be a FIU alumnus. Although I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English, it excites me to be so involved with another creative side of the university. It makes me even prouder to see the FIU Art + Art History family engage with both the internal and external communities during such a pivotal moment in the art world every year.

FIU Art + Art History Chair Jacek J. Kolasinski and I recognize this engagement and are proud to present this publication again to you. In addition to publishing this special issue, we are also excited to present the articles you see here on the College of Architecture + The Arts News, which provides an easy way to share our stories throughout the World Wide Web.

During my assignments this year, I visited the Art Basel-Miami Beach fair at the Miami Beach Convention Center, Design Miami, SCOPE Miami Beach, Art Miami, CONTEXT Art Miami, and UNTITLED. Art Fair. As an art department in the vibrant city of Miami, FIU Art + Art History feels it is important to immerse the department in such a significant string of events, which represent the environment into which our graduates propel once they leave the classrooms and studios.

At UNTITLED., I was delighted to see the fruition of the intellectual partnership between the fair and The FIU College of Architecture + The Arts. The fair was not only curated by one of our own department alumni, but it also included a special presentation of our Master of Fine Arts candidates’ Fall 2014 thesis show.

As I mentioned in the last issue, this involvement on behalf of our students, faculty, and alumni demonstrates FIU’s desire for learning beyond the university campus. The talent, thought, and creativity that springs from this involvement truly shows that our FIU Art + Art History family is “Worlds Ahead.”

Juan Brizuela
Media and Marketing Coordinator
FIU Department of Art + Art History
Academics

Discover your artistic identity, share your vision with students and faculty, and grow within a multi-national, multi-cultural artistic community. Our interdisciplinary approach to teaching art and art history is the cornerstone of our curriculum. As a student, you have the opportunity to learn the art of:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Sculpture
- Ceramics
- Time-based + Digital Art
- Traditional + Digital Photography
- Mixed Media

As an Art + Art History student, you have the opportunity to enhance your academic experience through our:

Faculty + Visiting Artists
Cultural Institutions:
- The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum
- The Wolfsonian-FIU
Studio Facilities at
- Modesto A. Maidique Campus
- Biscayne Bay Campus
- CARTA Miami Beach Urban Studios
Community Outreach Opportunities

A degree from the FIU Art + Art History Department not only develops your artistic technique and vision, but also prepares you for the understanding of the methodology, theory, and criticism of art in all of its forms.

Undergraduate Programs
Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Art
Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Art
BA in Art History
Minor in Art
Minor in Art History

Graduate Programs
Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Visual Arts
MFA in Visual Arts: Curatorial Practice Track

Non-Degree Programs
Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies

For advising on Art + Art History, you may contact:

Maida Purdy, Academic Advisor
email: mapurd@fiu.edu
Tel: 305 348 3539

“Small Rain” by Urs Fischer at Art Basel-Miami Beach
I encourage you to stay connected with your fellow FIU Golden Panthers and come join us at any of the exciting alumni events we host throughout the year, including happy hours, event receptions, Silver Pride Reunion, and Homecoming. We’d love to see you and learn about what you’ve been doing!

You are a graduate not only of a successful College, but of an exciting university. As such, I encourage you to join the Alumni Association if you have not already done so. Along with the numerous activities and events hosted by the Association, benefits of membership include discounts with campus, community and national partners, subscription to the FIU Magazine, free admission to tailgating parties and reduced ticket packages to all FIU athletic events.

In order to make sure you’re aware of all the latest events at CARTA, we have recently created a Facebook page specifically for you, our alumni! “Like” our CARTA Alumni Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CARTAAAlumni) to share stories, receive updates, and stay in touch with fellow CARTA Golden Panthers.

Keep in touch. Send us a note and let us know how you are doing. Come home soon!

Maria G. Claverie (MS ’00)
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Congrats on Becoming Part of the CARTA Alumni Network!