The Department of Visual Arts is proud to present this overview of exemplary events from our 2012-13 academic year. The collection could not have been possible without the efforts of our outstanding faculty, students, and staff. Their efforts enable a unique pedagogical environment for the furthering of creative research, critical discourse, and cultural practice, embodied in the outstanding works and events of this landmark year.
UC San Diego’s Department of Visual Arts has been an innovative force in the international art community for nearly half a century. It is one of the country’s leading centers for research in contemporary art practice, history and theory and one of the few institutions in the country that combines its MFA and Ph.D. programs in a single scholarly and artistic community. With artists, curators, critics, and historians from all over the world, our community of scholars and dialogue, diverse domains of practice are synergized in novel forms of production, analysis, organization, and display.

The Department has a long-standing commitment to interdisciplinary and research-based approaches to artmaking. Situated within a large metropolitan region stretching from Los Angeles across the border to Tijuana, the visual arts program is deeply tied to the history of artistic innovation in Southern California and the border culture of the U.S. and Mexico. It has an ongoing interest in urban, ecological, and territorial transformations and their critical relationship to arts and culture, often in the context of its engagement with Latin America along a trans-continental axis to the south and East Asia along a trans-Pacific axis to the west.

Widely recognized for its unique concentration of faculty concerned with the production, criticism, and analysis of contemporary art, the department is also recognized as a nexus for innovative research that bridges artistic practice with forms of intellectual inquiry and creative production across the humanities and sciences. Faculty and students engage with a diverse range of research methodologies and disciplinary Specializations, however situated their work might be within a particular historical or disciplinary domain. They collaborate with colleagues across the performing and literary arts, social sciences, cognitive sciences, engineering, and urban studies, as well as with practitioners in the larger regional community.

Faculty and students engage with a diverse range of research methodologies and disciplinary Specializations, however situated their work might be within a particular historical or disciplinary domain. They collaborate with colleagues across the performing and literary arts, social sciences, cognitive sciences, engineering, and urban studies, as well as with practitioners in the larger regional community.

...and the school of Engineering. New research and production studios include those devoted to the exploration of Discourse and Cultural Production; Experimental Painting and Sculpture; Active Structures and Materials; Experimental Drawing; and Performative Nanobiotics. The department’s facilities also include a laboratory for Experimental Media with state-of-the-art 4K video, HD editing and sound production suites, and a Fabrication Lab equipped with an advanced Robotic Milling System whose specialized tooling and software systems allow the full-scale design and production of complex, 3-dimensional forms in nearly any material. Another of the department’s main sites for interdisciplinary exchange is the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (Calit2), where faculty and students work with researchers at the forefront of advanced networking, visualization, and communications technologies, exploring 4K cinema, experimental gaming environments, locative media, embedded computing, and visual analytics, in ways that further link engineering, science and technology with the visual arts.

Three primary galleries are programmed by the department. The University Art Gallery, founded in 1966, has had a long-standing commitment to new forms of artistic practice, with a distinguished history of exhibitions featuring some of the most significant figures in the areas of installation, performance and studio-based art practice. It has originated some of the earliest west coast exhibitions of the most influential Conceptualists of the time. The Visual Arts Gallery at the SME building hosts presentations by artists and creative researchers at the forefront of new work in technological forms. Deeply intertwined with the gallery’s mission, the department’s ongoing commitment to the development of new curatorial strategies and exhibitions further the Visual Arts Gallery’s dedication to the development of new forms of cultural practice and analysis—forms that are barely visible to us today.

In these ways and others, the Department of Visual Arts continues its commitment to probing the necessary interconnections between art, culture, and political life. Developing a diverse community of artists, theorists, historians, and cultural practitioners, the department furthers its dedication to the development of pioneering scholarly and artistic works, producing new interfaces among faculty and students, artists and scientists, academics and broader publics.

Jordan Crandall
Professor and Chair
Active Structures + Materials

Active Structures + Materials is home to two groups: the Material Culture Working Group and the Active Structures Research Group.

The Material Culture Working Group, led by faculty Norman Bryson and Elizabeth Newcomb, was established to afford opportunities for new dialogues, exchanges and collaborations across the variety of disciplines participating in material culture research: a growing area of scholarly interest that has emerged in the past decade across the humanities, arts, sciences, and social sciences. It acknowledges that how we experience the world relies on a complex and dynamic interrelationship with the objects and environments all around us, through our thoughts, perception, and abilities to engage with them as creative agents, and that this interplay constitutes a vital realm of activity that requires new analytical and aesthetic frameworks.

The group meets throughout the academic year for lectures, readings, and discussions from researchers working in disciplines that include philosophy, literature, cinema, media studies, anthropology, art history, linguistics, science studies, and cognitive science. Meetings in fall 2012 involved a general introductory discussion with readings that included Bill Brown’s “Thing Theory.” Eva Domanskis’s “The Material Presence of the Past,” and Stephen Connor’s “Thinking Things,” and an exploration of “Presence and Embodied Experience in Sculpture” through the work of faculty members Jennifer Pastor and Anya Gallaccio. For the winter 2013 meeting, titled “The Body as a Sort of Cinematic Thing,” Professor Lesley Stern presented an excerpt from her book Dead and Alive: The Body as Cinematic Thing, exploring the material status of the body in cinema. The spring 2013 meeting involved a talk by faculty member Benjamin H. Bratton regarding the contingencies of politics and aesthetics with regard to the “anthropocene subject,” with readings that included Gean Moreno’s “Notes on the Inorganic,” Nick Land’s “Machinic Desire,” and Reza Negarestani’s “Drafting the Inhuman.”

The Active Structures Research Group, led by Professor Jordan Croussall, will begin the coming year with a project at gallery@calit2 called AUTONOMOUS—an exhibition and conference that will explore ways to think and act in a world where “intelligence” becomes embedded into the fabric of everyday life. Including artworks by Harun Farocki, Casey Reas, and Rinke Dijkstra, in addition to lectures by researchers including Katherine Hayles and Nigel Thrift, the project examines the novel forms of agency that are able to communicate and respond to change in ways that often bypass the sensory and cognitive capacities of humans.

Arthur C. Clarke Center for Human Imagination

Exploring a future where technology, science, and art will converge in ways we can’t foresee, the Arthur C. Clarke Center for Human Imagination brings together artists and scientific researchers to, as Arthur C. Clarke has provocatively suggested, discover the limits of the possible by venturing past them into the impossible. Professor Sheldon Brown created and directs the Center.

During its inaugural year the Clarke Center hosted a symposium called Visions of the Future, which looked 33 years ahead through the incorporation of pioneering research in cognitive science, neuroscience, visual art, and design—a time frame that was inspired by the film 2001: A Space Odyssey, (the screenplay of which Clarke co-wrote, based on his short story), which was set in a future 33 years beyond its 1968 release date. A symposium called Starship Century was also presented, this time looking 100 years ahead—“when we can travel to the stars.” The symposium looked at ideas ranging from the physics of propulsion systems to questions of what the “us” is that we could actually take beyond earth—the bodies that we inhabit right now, or its sets of information, or other forms that are difficult to imagine.

The symposium looked at ideas ranging from the physics of propulsion systems to questions of what the “us” is that we could actually take beyond earth—the bodies that we inhabit right now, or its sets of information, or other forms that are difficult to imagine.

The symposium looked at ideas ranging from the physics of propulsion systems to questions of what the “us” is that we could actually take beyond earth—the bodies that we inhabit right now, or its sets of information, or other forms that are difficult to imagine.
Center for Design and Geopolitics

The Center for Design and Geopolitics (D:GP), led by Associate Professor Benjamin H. Bratton, is a think-tank that uses Speculative Art and Design to investigate how planetary-scale computation transforms political, technological, and ecological systems. D:GP serves as the locus for a global discourse that draws on art, architecture, computer science, biological sciences, and political philosophy. Its work begins from the supposition that the geopolitical architectures derived from industrial heavy-carbon economies have reached an unsolvable impasse and require redesign. Toward that its program is experimental and projective: instead of bunkering into fragile oppositional positions, is experimental and projective: instead of

D:GP has hosted several conferences and symposia on campus bringing together designers, scientists, programmers, policymakers, and fiction writers to consider how emergent platforms — including Nano3 at Calit2 and the Laboratory for Nanoelectronics.
Discursive and Curatorial Productions

A new practice of research has emerged from the Discursive and Curatorial Productions (DCP) initiative. This space is designed to experiment and present critical dialogue on new forms of material intelligence, technologies, and platforms, while addressing the shifts in models of curatorial practices and criticism. Theoretical research produced from the DCP has practical implications that address curatorial exchange, the globalization of art markets, and the shifting modes of art exhibition.

In the past year the initiative has organized publications, exhibitions, events, colloquia, and symposia that reflect on curatorial and artistic production. Some highlights include a workshop with art critic, curator, and historian Cuauhtémoc Medina titled “Exhibitions Are Material Forces, Too.” Guest speakers during the year included Warren Neidich, Tania Bruguera, Suhail Malik, and Gareth James. These visitors led seminars and workshops under the theme of “Conflict of the Faculties: Material Forces, Too.”

In addition to hosting an array of speakers, the DCP will program the Visual Arts Gallery during the coming year. The fall 2013 exhibition, SUBTERRANEIA, offers a selection of works based on the built and natural environment’s root systems, foundations, and infrastructures that lay buried or concealed underground.

The DCP is led by faculty member Mariana Wardwell. The advisory board is comprised of faculty members Norman Bryson, Kuiyi Shen, Lesley Stern, Grant Kester, Elizabeth Newsome, and John C. Welchman. Art history graduate students head the Curatorial Committee: Elizabeth Miller, Melinda Guillet, Sascha Crasnow, and Lara Bullock. The publication committee is comprised of faculty members Norman Bryson, Kuiyi Shen, Lesley Stern, Grant Kester, Elizabeth Newsome, and John C. Welchman.

Engaging artists from a variety of backgrounds, the Experimental Sculpture and Painting Production Studio connects individuals with an interest in sculptural inquiry. The studio examines large-scale experimental sculpture, traditional and unconventional structures, active surfaces, and hybridized methods of making. Professor Jennifer Pastor leads the studio with the help of Professor Rubén Ortiz-Torres and MFA candidates Hermione Spriggs, Aitor Lajarin, Dominic Paul Miller, Matt Savitsky, Jay Nelson, and Joshua Miller.

The studio supports long- and short-term production of visual arts faculty, MFA and Ph.D. art practice students, advanced undergraduates, guest artists, and materials research collaborators. Working in conversation with the Materials Culture Initiative, the studio creates a corridor with projects that utilize the integrated spaces of the Fabrication Lab, materials studios, and other visual arts production and presentation facilities, exploring new and composite materials, 3D technologies, and other advanced tools.

Some projects and events have included Dual, a parallel drawing show between two and three-dimensions. This co-exhibition with the Experimental Drawing Studio featured works that explore the intersections of drawing and sculpture. Hermione Spriggs and Aitor Lajarin presented their collaborative project Food(...) edition guide for the ( ...) prowler—an installation of projected videos illustrating the usage and performance of the exhibited guide, surrounded by a collection of objects gathered during outdoor performances. The studio also hosted visiting artist Harry Dodge, one of the founders of San Francisco’s The Itinerant Lady, who screened his new film Meaty (Boaty Big and Bouncy) and discussed his current body of sculptural work, and artist Paul Sietsema, who spoke about his sculptural and drawing practice and presented his new film At the Hour of Tea, which probed the relationship between these various mediums as phenomenological experience.

This space is designed to experiment and present critical dialogue on new forms of material intelligence, technologies, and platforms, while addressing the shifts in models of curatorial practices and criticism.
Experimental Drawing Studio

The Experimental Drawing Studio explores the role of drawing as an interdisciplinary form, providing an active environment for creating and research and cross-disciplinary collaboration. The Studio is led by faculty member Amy Adler with recent alumnus Josh Tonies (Managing Director), graduate students Allison Spence, Nichole Speciale, Emily Grenader, Matteo D’Onori, and undergraduates Max Kamin and Vanessa Martinez.

In its inaugural year the Studio launched several programs including “Am I Drawing Now?”, a series of lectures, conversations, performances, and exhibitions that explored the role of drawing in various research practices, the Studio welcomed faculty hosted a series of workshops for students that explored astronomical data as two-dimensional form with visualization facilities at Calit2. The Lab also housed a summer residency with artists that included Dr. Nadir Weibel from computer science, along with established artists Hillary Mushkin and Karl Haendel. The series concluded with a performance of CyberSpaceLand by Associate Professor Amy Alexander.

The Studio’s exploration of drawing transcended two-dimensional form with “Wielding Into Film,” a screening series that considers drawing as it exists within cinema. The first iteration of the series featured a screening of James Cameron’s Titanic, an introduction by Professor Babette Mangolte, and a live drawing performance by MFA candidate Kate Clark. The series continued with “The Hand: A Weekend of Film,” two days of film and animation screenings and discussions led by Professor Jean-Pierre Gorin. The Studio also hosted projects that included Drua, a parallel drawing show between two and three-dimensions, a co-exhibition with the Experimental Sculpture and Painting and Production Studio; motionDraw, a project produced by an interdisciplinary group of UC San Diego students working with research scientist, Dr. Nadir Weibel; and an “Artist Book Workshop” hosted by alumni Louis Schmidt. Beginning fall 2013, the Experimental Drawing Studio activity will be released as a series of publications that highlight the Studio’s research.

Experimental Media Lab

The Experimental Media Lab is a testing site for research in media production and pedagogy. The Lab was led this year by faculty member Michael Trigilio, during the coming year, faculty members Amy Alexander and Brian Cross will join as co-directors.

Highlights from the past year include Solar Variations, an exhibition from “Project Planetary” faculty Tara Knight (theatre & dance), Adam Burgesser (physics), and Michael Trigilio. The project was an exploration of the variability of the Sun through light and sound. Using photodiode sensors, UV imaging Data, and film, viewers of the installation were embedded into a solar movie. During spring 2013, Project Planetary faculty hosted a series of workshops for students that explored astronomical data as aesthetic material. The workshops resulted in an exhibition with students from physics and visual arts collaborating on projects incorporating video, sound, performance, electronics, and computing.

During the past year the Lab has also showcased the media installation work of MFA students Jamilah Abdul-Sabur, Bill Basquin, Danny Canisarzo, and Jay Noland. In June, artists and students from the International Collaborative Arts Program (ICAP) resided in the Lab for a week of visualization research, working with 3D videography, motion-graphics, and LIDAR processing for visualization facilities at Calit2. ICAP was invited to collaborate with Michael Trigilio’s project at Calit2 (SEAM). Socially Engaged Speculative Media Initiative) resulting in works from students on campus, and at University of New Mexico collaborating on experimental new-media works and data-driven visualizations.

The Lab also housed a summer residency with MFA Candidate Emily Grenader, and visiting programmers Fernando Nos (CSE, PUCRS Brazil) and Danilo Gaiques Rodrigues. Their project, VideoMob, is a new take on the photo booth, inviting users to record a video portrait to be instantly combined into a dynamic crowd. Installed in the Lab and across campus, the video booths will create virtual communities by enabling strangers to include their moving self-portrait among a crowd, establishing a stronger connection between strangers and enabling an actual relationship to form out of a virtual one. The project has been supported by computer science and engineering research scientist and lecturer Dr. Nadir Weibel.

Plans for the coming year include “Sound for Visual Artists” workshops lead by Professor Trigilio; workshops in “synthesis” with music faculty Tom Elbe; and a workshop on projection mapping by theatre and dance Professor Tara Knight.

Performatve Nanorobotics Lab

Sustainable infrastructure and conceptual art interested at the Performatve Nanorobotics Lab, led by faculty members Ricardo Dominguez and Brett Stabaum. This year the Lab presented the Facial Weaponization Suite, a two-part workshop organized by visiting graduate student Zach Blas, where mask-making was examined as a queer and feminist resistance practice. The project began with an open dialogue about the social and political impact of biometric technologies, the science of identifying humans by physiological and behavioral characteristics commonly used in surveillance practices. As an act of protest, the participating group created a collective mask based on participant’s facial data, producing a mask that could not be detected by facial recognition techniques. Participants then collectively performed an intervention based on readings, discussions, and the mask-making process. Future projects at the Lab include a Do it yourself (DIY) Atomic Force Microscope conceived by Professor Dominguez.
Graduate student Kate Clark interviews Professor Fred Lonidier

Fred Lonidier: I have secrets, you know. We’re not doing a history. These are visual arts stories. Because actual history would be problematic, it would take a historian to pry that out of us. History is getting to the bottom of it.

So you think of documentation as storytelling?

Absolutely. The photos are not self-explanatory. Captioning and identification is important. Anecdotes are key, where people say, “Oh yeah, I remember that reception, I remember so and so said this.”

What did the Department of Visual Arts Archive Project rise from?

The project started many years ago, during UC San Diego’s 40th anniversary. The campus was looking for photos. So, I went to my proof archive and showed them far more than they had in mind. It fact they ended up using one photo of a protest in support of a daycare center on campus because they were very early digital period, and I sent them far reaching out to all past and present faculty, graduates, undergraduates, visitors, for contributions of notable documentation. The committee’s view is that we want the archive to be as wide and deep as possible.

What do you think the role of an archive plays in a young institution like the Department of Visual Arts?

Departments crank along in real time. The fact that Allan Kaprow or David Antin were once here, on a day to day basis that only comes up in relation to showing their work and writings as part of the education of the undergraduates and graduates. We’ve produced quite a number of photographers at UC San Diego who’ve made a name for themselves. Allan Kaprow is a household name. David Antin, Ellie Antin, Alan Sekula, Carrie Mae Weems, Martha Rosler, the Harrisons. To the extent that any of this bears on their education, then it’s direct. But a lot of interest simply would stem from people’s curiosity.

That’s what got me going. I’ve been here since the winter of ’69 and the anti-war movement was alive and well. I was going to demonstrations and taking pictures so I had a lot of material. I’ve provided the department with over 9500 photographs. Now, we are reaching out to all past and present faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, visitors, for contributions of notable documentation. The committee’s view is that we want the archive to be as wide and deep as possible.

How is the work you are doing affected by the arc of time?

This is the thing that happens with photographers: if you are a documentary, and if you live long enough, then eventually your early stuff is history, and there is a whole set of interest that develops around content that previously was not there. This started to develop with Pacific Standard Time a few years ago, and has grown with the Chair’s interest in a department history on the website.

My early work dealing with issues of gender didn’t really take off for me until now. I didn’t have a gallery until I was 67 years old and that’s because this early stuff has panache. So I’m in a show in Berlin right now and the main work in the gallery was in my MFA show. This can happen to everybody who produces things in the public. So the historical arch can be quite unpredictable and curious.

Art historians Shelton Nodelman and Susan Smith also facilitate the department archive project. For more information on image submissions please contact Sheena Ghanbari, sgarchae@ucsd.edu.

Salt Exclosure: Red Hill Marina, Imperial Valley

Collaborating with engineers from the Jacobs School of Engineering, visual arts MFA candidate Dominic Miller built Salt Exclosure: Red Hill Marina, Imperial Valley, a sculpture that doubles as a water desalinization system in the Salton Sea east of San Diego. Miller’s sculpture uses solar energy to evaporate water from the sea and gather precipitated salts. Salt Exclosure: Red Hill Marina, Imperial Valley. The exhibit was on view in June 2013 at the new SME building on campus as part of Experimental Sculpture and Painting Production Studio.

“My projects tend to respond to local issues at specific sites,” Miller said. “In this case you have a vibrant agricultural industry within a desert and simultaneously a significant riparian habitat which has evolved along the Salton Sea. As bird populations have relocated there from places such as the Tijuana Estuary, this riparian habitat becomes an important site which is also threatened. My ‘exclosure’ precipitates salt compounds from sea water in situ. The idea is to produce a stabilizing presence in the area.”

For his next project, Miller wants to look at the implications of NAFTA 20 years after the treaty was ratified by the U.S. and Mexico — specifically the impact on maquiladora workers.

Unweave

As a product of the Discursive and Curatorial Productions initiative, Unweave acts as a series of research notebooks. The first issue was titled “Engineering and its reversals: materials, structures, seeds, aesthetics, cognition,” and launched in tandem with the SME building opening. The inaugural issue was edited and curated by art history faculty member Mariana Wardwell and independent curator Lucía Sanromán. The publication accompanied the NanoMacroMega exhibition at the Visual Arts Gallery and included texts from faculty and graduate students.

The second publication will reflect the ideas presented in Conflict of the Faculties, a seminar and workshop series presented by the Discursive and Curatorial Productions initiative. This issue will focus on the tensions surrounding art and education.

The third issue of Unweave is scheduled to be released in January 2014.
New interdisciplinary collaborations

Intercultural and multimedia collaboration is standard practice for Department of Visual Arts graduate students.

In a recent project, Matt Savitsky collaborated with pianist Todd Moellenberg to create Posing Nothing, a fresh interpretation of music by avant garde composers Chris Dench, Jonathon Harvey, George Benjamin, and Harrison Birtwistle. The work combines musical performance with dance movement.

Jamilah Sabur’s video Academe: Learning Disance was a 2012 collaboration with Liam Kavanagh, a Ph.D. student in psychology and cognitive science. Sabur described the video as “a disjointed discussion on military defense spending and learning.” Drawing from the work of B.F. Skinner, Leon Festinger, and the defense department’s DARPA (an agency that funds development of new military technologies), Sabur explored “whether or not humans possess a ‘terrorist gene’.”

Nichte Speciale collaborated with clarinetist Curt Miller on Repeat After Me II at the San Diego Museum of Art in August 2013. Exploring the intersection between the Illusory surface and its obscured three-dimensionality both within and without the context of feminine art making, the installation consisted of six 6-foot-tall canvas-turned-speakers in a circle with a microphone outside the ring. Viewers spoke into the mic and heard their words repeated through the speakers. Their voices became part of a larger murmur of things previously said, creating a sonic portrait of museum-goers.

Sensitive Boys

Sensitive Boys is a collaborative zine that humorously explores the tensions inherent in discussion about gender, language, and emotional expression. Artemisa Clark is pursuing her MFA in visual arts and Melinda Guillen is a Ph.D. student in art history, theory, and criticism. Together, they are Sensitive Boys. The first issue, “Feeling Feelings,” was published in March 2013 with support from the department. It featured contributions from Catherine Cracchi (Ph.D., art practice), Dominic Miller (MFA), Matt Savitsky (MFA), as well as other writers and artists from Los Angeles, Seattle, New York City, and Berlin.

Clark and Guillen explain that they feel a sense of permission or license, “as sensitive boys, we are able to identify our own complex analytical positions, articulated from an aggregate of various modes of cognition, without the debilitating pressure to cautiously navigate the field of language, fraught with landmines. Instead, at worst, a sensitive boy encounters nonsens. No. Not us.”

Sensitive Boys is about materializing a space of empathy, compassion, and generosity embodied by various configurations of bodies and objects in a particular space. The duo aims to address the transformative potential of just hanging out.

DODO Editions

Named after the flightless extinct bird, DODO Editions is a contemporary online art review launched by current MFA candidates, Joshua Miller, and Julian Rogers. The pair met at the department’s graduate student admit day and soon after realized that they shared an idea for creating an arts review website in San Diego. Miller and Rogers launched DODO Editions in San Diego October 2012. First and foremost Miller and Rogers are artists, but as Roger’s states “writing has become a good exercise for me. I can hone my abilities to look at work.”

The goal of DODO Editions is to bridge the Tijuana, San Diego, and Los Angeles art worlds, while creating a sense of accountability for archiving local exhibitions. DODO Editions covers contemporary art exhibitions across various genres. Some reviews capture alumni exhibitions like Inédito by Yvonne Venegas at the 206 Arte Contemporáneo in Tijuana and Nothing by Joe Yorty at Helmuth Projects in San Diego. Miller and Rogers have also engaged members of the arts community in addition to alumni and students in this project.

The current team of writers includes San Diego Museum of Art curator Amy Galpin, Ph.D. student Melinda Guiller, Tijuana born writer Dari Fortis, and Los Angeles based writer Ifra Velayi in addition to Rogers. Miller serves as the editor, Matthew Dunn the copy editor, Altor Lajari the translator, and undergraduate student Lawrence Chi acts as the web editor. Miller and Rogers have taken advantage of their networks to create a strong team of writers and editors and also have an open call or writers.

The art review site is online at dodoeditions.com
Los Laureles Wicking Gardens

Constructing a viable form of vegetable gardening is at the heart of the Los Laureles Wicking Garden Project. The project brings together many strands: environmental and border issues, urban development and wetlands preservation, toxicity and sustainability, and the question of community engagement by artists. Laureles is a particularly important canyon in the Tijuana-San Diego area because it links an informal settlement in precarious terrain on the Mexico side with an estuary in San Diego. The estuary is threatened by waste from the canyon (produced through flooding and toxic trash), and the people in the canyon are equally threatened by toxic chemicals (much of it from the maquiladora production plants) and lack of infrastructure.

Faculty and graduate students banded together after Professor Lesley Stern’s seminar on gardens as public domains. Inspired in part by Professor Teddy Cruz’s public culture practice, their idea was to conceptualize this region as a laboratory. In collaboration with Alter Terra, a Non-governmental Organization operated by Oscar Romo with the help of Jennifer Hazart, the group began to conduct social and ecological interventions in the neighborhood. This manifested into a series of public workshops that investigated different means of water conservation and container gardening by borrowing a model of wicking beds developed in Australia. As the project continued and the contacts in the community grew, the communication and exchange of technologies became a focal point in this process. The team stated that this oral modality restored our voice so as to engage a community while invariably remaining as outsiders. The fundamentally pedagogical relationship allowed for a deeper transmission of our intentions, but it is likely that our role will change as the project continues. Many questions persist as one system reaches a threshold and encounters broader productive rhythms. In addition to work on site we will continue to experiment with other forms (so far, a preliminary exhibition, writings, and conference presentations). Ultimately, a commitment to duration is the function which persists.”

The Los Laureles Wicking Garden Project involves Department of Visual Arts Professors Anya Gallaccio and Lesley Stern; Communications Professor Elana Zilberg; graduate students, Kate Clark, Samara Kaplan, Alex Kershaw, Dominic Miller, Matt Savitsky, Emily Sevier, and Nicole Speciale. The project is supported by the UCSD Center for the Humanities.

Los Laureles Wicking Gardens

University Art Gallery Curatorial Fellowship

Michelle Hyun came to UC San Diego in the summer of 2012 as the first University Art Gallery Curatorial Fellow. She set out to program the gallery with events and installations different from traditional exhibits of art and sculpture, and to attract new visitors from groups that are not usually addressed by the art community. In the process, she is also exploring new roles for curators.

Her inaugural exhibit was last spring’s “We’d love your company in collaboration with New York artist Ethan Breckenridge, who installed platforms, walls, mirrors, and two-dimensional human figures that seemed to emerge from the gallery floor. Hyun invited various groups to invent uses for the space. “We’d love your company” included contributions from artists Liz Magic Laser and Martha Rosler, undergraduate bioscientists, students from the Preuss School, and writer Suhail Malik in collaboration with shadow puppetry performer Van C. Tran. Hyun, whose previous experiences include curating installations in New York City and managing a gallery in San Francisco, is using her fellowship to develop new curatorial practices.

“In my research I’ve been looking at different types of spatial practices and political happenings that have taken place at UC San Diego...” she said. In the sixties, for instance, the University was a hotbed of political activism led by figures such as Herbert Marcuse and Angela Davis. “I want to give these kinds of alternative ideas visibility again.”

With the campus community as a focus of her work, Hyun wants to engage a broader array of interest groups as collaborators and gallery visitors.

“With the fellowship, there’s only so much that can be done during my two years here,” Hyun said. But she hopes that her explorations as curatorial fellow in search of “new publics” at UC San Diego will lay the groundwork for successors who continue to experiment and re-define the role of the curator.

In my research I’ve been looking at different types of spatial practices and political happenings that have taken place at UC San Diego... In the sixties, for instance, the University was a hotbed of political activism led by figures such as Herbert Marcuse and Angela Davis. I want to give these kinds of alternative ideas visibility again.

Preuss students visit the Department of Visual Arts

This past year UC San Diego Arts and Humanities Dean Seth Lerer teamed up with The Preuss School UCSD administrators and teachers to encourage meaningful arts collaborations on campus. Preuss is a charter middle and high school, designed for highly motivated low income students, that has been recognized by Newsweek as the top transformative high school in the nation. In conjunction with this broader arts immersion initiative with Preuss, the Department of Visual Arts gave graduating high school students a glimpse of the opportunities in the media arts.

This past May, a group of Preuss seniors received a private tour of the Mandeville Annex Gallery and viewed an exhibition of films from undergraduate students participating in the Adam Douglas Kent Media Awards. The students viewed seven films that addressed the prompt, “So What’s Your Story.” After watching these autobiographical accounts the seniors were joined by undergraduate filmmakers Gail Gutierrez and Young Yi. Gutierrez submitted Dalaga Diaries, a film that blurs her past and present memories at the Pacific Ocean. Yi presented Farewell, My Kim Jong-un, a film that deals with the loss of a family member.

The seniors asked questions like, “What is it like to be a visual arts major? What are your classes like? How did you get the inspiration for your film?” The visit concluded with a lively conversation with each of the participating undergraduate artists. The Preuss students did not hesitate to take advantage of this opportunity with undergraduate students.

Another Preuss visit to the programs at the Department of Visual Arts will take place in fall 2013.

University Art Gallery Curatorial Fellowship

Michelle Hyun came to UC San Diego in the summer of 2012 as the first University Art Gallery Curatorial Fellow. She set out to program the gallery with events and installations different from traditional exhibits of art and sculpture, and to attract new visitors from groups that are not usually addressed by the art community. In the process, she is also exploring new roles for curators.

Her inaugural exhibit was last spring’s “We’d love your company in collaboration with New York artist Ethan Breckenridge, who installed platforms, walls, mirrors, and two-dimensional human figures that seemed to emerge from the gallery floor. Hyun invited various groups to invent uses for the space. “We’d love your company” included contributions from artists Liz Magic Laser and Martha Rosler, undergraduate bioscientists, students from the Preuss School, and writer Suhail Malik in collaboration with shadow puppetry performer Van C. Tran. Hyun, whose previous experiences include curating installations in New York City and managing a gallery in San Francisco, is using her fellowship to develop new curatorial practices.

“In my research I’ve been looking at different types of spatial practices and political happenings that have taken place at UC San Diego...” she said. In the sixties, for instance, the University was a hotbed of political activism led by figures such as Herbert Marcuse and Angela Davis. “I want to give these kinds of alternative ideas visibility again.”

With the campus community as a focus of her work, Hyun wants to engage a broader array of interest groups as collaborators and gallery visitors.

“With the fellowship, there’s only so much that can be done during my two years here,” Hyun said. But she hopes that her explorations as curatorial fellow in search of “new publics” at UC San Diego will lay the groundwork for successors who continue to experiment and re-define the role of the curator.

In my research I’ve been looking at different types of spatial practices and political happenings that have taken place at UC San Diego... In the sixties, for instance, the University was a hotbed of political activism led by figures such as Herbert Marcuse and Angela Davis. I want to give these kinds of alternative ideas visibility again.

Preuss students visit the Department of Visual Arts

This past year UC San Diego Arts and Humanities Dean Seth Lerer teamed up with The Preuss School UCSD administrators and teachers to encourage meaningful arts collaborations on campus. Preuss is a charter middle and high school, designed for highly motivated low income students, that has been recognized by Newsweek as the top transformative high school in the nation. In conjunction with this broader arts immersion initiative with Preuss, the Department of Visual Arts gave graduating high school students a glimpse of the opportunities in the media arts.

This past May, a group of Preuss seniors received a private tour of the Mandeville Annex Gallery and viewed an exhibition of films from undergraduate students participating in the Adam Douglas Kent Media Awards. The students viewed seven films that addressed the prompt, “So What’s Your Story.” After watching these autobiographical accounts the seniors were joined by undergraduate filmmakers Gail Gutierrez and Young Yi. Gutierrez submitted Dalaga Diaries, a film that blurs her past and present memories at the Pacific Ocean. Yi presented Farewell, My Kim Jong-un, a film that deals with the loss of a family member.

The seniors asked questions like, “What is it like to be a visual arts major? What are your classes like? How did you get the inspiration for your film?” The visit concluded with a lively conversation with each of the participating undergraduate artists. The Preuss students did not hesitate to take advantage of this opportunity with undergraduate students.

Another Preuss visit to the programs at the Department of Visual Arts will take place in fall 2013.
NanoMacroMega exhibit inaugurates SME Building

NanoMacroMega was the inaugural exhibit in the Visual Arts Gallery in the SME building, where engineers, scientific researchers, and artists work side by side on projects that emphasize experimental thinking and technologies.

Curated by Lucia Sanromán, opened in September 2012, NanoMacroMega showcased work by faculty such as Benjamin H. Bratton, Sheldon Brown, Teddy Cruz, Ricardo Dominguez, Ana Galliaccio, Rubin Ortiz-Torres, and Michael Trigilio.

Galliaccio created a sculptural tree and showed large photographic prints made from electronic microscope scans of nano dirt particles she collected on road trips. Bratton examined the geopolitical implications of his wearable Nanorokin tattoos incorporating bioelectronics by Joseph Wang that detect materials such as explosives. Ortiz-Torres presented a performance of “Hi ‘n’ Lo” with a forklift dancing like a low-rider car.

The $83 million 183,000-square-foot SME Building is LEED Silver certified, which means a high standard of “green” design due to air conditioning and heating units to exterior features such as recycled water from rooftop systems and tools and devices and projects that are deliberately intermingled so that engineers will constantly find themselves engaged in conversations with right-brain creators.

Several department research initiatives are housed in the new building (see initiatives, pages 6-13). SME contains cutting-edge equipment such as a KUKA robotic mill. Guided by an artist’s computer design, the mill carves complex forms from a variety of materials. An ongoing collaboration with Germany’s famed Bauhaus school of arts and design, founded in the 1919 by architect Walter Gropius and later directed by Mies van der Rohe, is also part of SME’s mission.

Opening ceremonies on September 14, 2012 included remarks by UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla and Dean of Arts and Humanities Seth Lerer, with a keynote by science fiction author and UC San Diego alumnus David Brin.

“Here in this marvelous new SME building, fiercely pragmatic researchers and dissectors of objective reality will share floors with the Department of Visual Arts, in spaces that are deliberately intermingled so that engineers will constantly find themselves engaged in conversations with right-brain creators.”

“NanoMacroMega exhibit inaugurates SME Building”

For here in this marvelous new SME building, fiercely pragmatic researchers and dissectors of objective reality will share floors with the Department of Visual Arts, in spaces that are deliberately intermingled so that engineers will constantly find themselves engaged in conversations with right-brain creators.

Neighborhood projects give a local spin to Living as Form (The Nomadic Version)

Living as Form (The Nomadic Version) brought together works by 22 artists in a fall 2012 exhibit at the University Art Gallery, with site-specific satellite projects at San Diego locales. The exhibit explored new modes of artmaking in a rapidly changing, sometimes disturbing world. The exhibit was “nomadic” in the sense that it was an offshoot of the original 2011 exhibit at New York City’s Historical Essex Street Market, curated by Nat Thompson.

Projects included What’s the use!, a video panel and forum from There Goes the Neighborhood! The event included discussions about contemporary urban issues and a “diving performance” at Art Produce Gallery in San Diego’s North Park neighborhood. Cog•nate Collective produced events at the Port of Entry in San Ysidro along the San Diego-Mexico border. Interviews, debates, storytelling, performances, and poetry readings were broadcast via low-range radio and accessible at mobile listening stations at the border and at the University Art Gallery.

“Something historically unique is happening in cultural production that requires different rules for art than those of the 20th century,” curator Thompson said. “This culturally-sawy method of civic production has manifested in everyday urban life and growing civil unrest. Living as Farm (The Nomadic Version) is an opportunity to cast a wide net and ask: how do we make sense of this work, and in turn, how do we make sense of the world we find ourselves in?”

Cog•nate Collective produced events at the Port of Entry in San Ysidro along the San Diego-Mexico border. Interviews, debates, storytelling, performances, and poetry readings were broadcast via low-range radio and accessible at mobile listening stations at the border and at the University Art Gallery.
The department partners with MCASD to host Tania Bruguera

Cuban artist Tania Bruguera made a special visit to the Department of Visual Arts in February 2013. Bruguera delivered the Russell Lecture to a packed house at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, and she was the keynote presenter at the second Conflict of the Faculties workshop hosted by the Discursive and Curatorial Production initiative.

At the workshop, graduate students and art history faculty participated in a roundtable discussion led by faculty members Grant Kester and Mariana Wardwell, and independent curator, Lucia Sanroman. The discussion addressed the transformation of Bruguera’s neo-avant-garde and neo-conceptual action-based practice towards forms of artistic engagement that intervene into concrete political situations, aiming for efficacy, social change, and legislative transformation.

The workshop resulted in the creation of a series of critical position papers written by participating students in relation to Bruguera’s wider practice. Students were invited to consider involvement in fieldwork and production of Bruguera’s Immigrant Movement International in the San Diego-Tijuana border region, as part of the exhibition Policy as Form to be curated by Sanroman and organized by the Santa Monica Museum of Art in January 2014.

Annual conference and showcase of graduate student talent

Each year the department’s Ph.D. and MFA students spearhead a series of events that manifests into the Graduate Student Conference and Open Studios. The events highlight student achievements, engage the larger arts community, and give prospective students a peek into departmental programs.

The 6th Annual Graduate Student Conference, The Nature of Space, was organized by Ph.D. students Sascha Cassron and Elizabeth Miller. Cassron and Miller strove to “put together a group of presentations and conversations that would be especially thought-provoking and interesting.” The conference explored issues of space within the visual arts. Speakers were divided into two categories “Spaces of Conflict / Transition” and “Spaces of Imagination / Projection.” Following the faculty moderated panels, Dr. Mark Linder from Syracuse University School of Architecture presented the conference keynote address.

For the latter half of the day, MFA students opened up their studios and activated the art spaces in both the Visual Arts Facility and SME. Open Studios artist and organizer Matt Savitsky described the intrigue of stepping into an artist’s work space to CityBeat writer Alex Zaragoza, “To walk into an artist’s studio is exciting and enticing because you can see things in practice and performances in their natural setting, not in an intimidating art space. You’re closer to its source.”

In addition to viewing 37 artist studios, activities included exhibitions and projects from the department’s new research initiatives, a social hour hosted by MFA students, a salon-style exhibition of first year students, and an evening series of screenings and performances.

The events highlight student achievements, engage the larger arts community, and give prospective students a peek into departmental programs.
Graduating artists make their mark

Following tradition, the graduating class of MFA candidates presented a group exhibition of their work at the University Art Gallery in spring 2013. Art history, theory, and criticism Ph.D. students Melinda Guillen and Samara Kaplan curated MFA 2013, an exhibition of 15 graduating MFA candidates from the Department of Visual Arts.

Guilien explains that a large portion of the artwork is video, film, and installation and this influenced the overall feel of the exhibition. MFA 2013 focused on the work and individuality of the artist, “curatorially, we attempted to create 15 contained, intimate environments in the gallery via spotlighting and blocking out natural light.”

Graduating artists make their mark

The University Art Gallery exhibition We’d love your company invited the public to submit proposals for programs to take place in the gallery. One of the accepted proposals was the undergraduate art show, UAS @ UAG: Ambitions of the Student Artist. Organized by graduating students Jeffrey Robins and Nikki Sarto, the exhibition presented a diverse array of works from the undergraduate student artists at UC San Diego. The exhibition also included a student targeted panel with faculty members Amy Adler and Norman Bryson, graduate students Melinda Barnadas and Tae Hwang, and alumnae Collin Gabrielli. The 2013 Undergraduate Art Show closed We’d love your company on May 10, 2013.

Undergraduate art show at the University Art Gallery

The rich history of this exchange was enhanced by an introduction by former department Chair, Professor Emeritus, David Antin. He refers to Rosler as being in the nucleus of the early graduating MFA’s, and the perfect example of a transmedia artist. She started doing intelligent and meaningful shows in graduate school and even before graduate school.

We’d love your company brings back alumna Martha Rosler

The premise of We’d love your company was to extend a public invitation for program proposals of how to utilize the University Art Gallery space. The project featured a solo exhibition by New York-based artist Ethan Breckenridge and hosted programs ranging from a 24/7 study space hosted by the UCSD Public Education Coalition to a musical performance by Rachel Mason in collaboration with The Preuss School UCSD. Curator Michelle Hyun planned the exhibition with the intent to transform the gallery space and welcome new audiences to the gallery.

Artist and alumna Martha Rosler also returned to campus as part of We’d love your company. Rosler graduated with her MFA in 1974 and has since received international acclaim for her artwork and writing. In 2012, Rosler presented Meta-Monumental Garage Sale, a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. The exhibition was a large-scale version of the classic American garage sale and visitors had the opportunity to purchase second hand goods arranged by the artist. This project originated while Rosler was at UC San Diego in 1973 with the Monumental Garage Sale she presented at the University Art Gallery.

Coming full-circle, Rosler took the stage at the gallery and led a discussion about her past and present projects focusing on the role of the visitor. The rich history of this exchange was enhanced by an introduction by former department Chair, Professor Emeritus, David Antin. He refers to Rosler as being in the nucleus of the early graduating MFA’s, and “the perfect example of a transmedia artist. She started doing intelligent and meaningful shows in graduate school and even before graduate school.”

After Rosler’s talk UCSD Alumni honored her visit with a reception.

Graduating artists make their mark

The rich history of this exchange was enhanced by an introduction by former department Chair, Professor Emeritus, David Antin. He refers to Rosler as being in the nucleus of the early graduating MFA’s, and the perfect example of a transmedia artist. She started doing intelligent and meaningful shows in graduate school and even before graduate school.

We’d love your company brings back alumna Martha Rosler

The premise of We’d love your company was to extend a public invitation for program proposals of how to utilize the University Art Gallery space. The project featured a solo exhibition by New York-based artist Ethan Breckenridge and hosted programs ranging from a 24/7 study space hosted by the UCSD Public Education Coalition to a musical performance by Rachel Mason in collaboration with The Preuss School UCSD. Curator Michelle Hyun planned the exhibition with the intent to transform the gallery space and welcome new audiences to the gallery.

Artist and alumna Martha Rosler also returned to campus as part of We’d love your company. Rosler graduated with her MFA in 1974 and has since received international acclaim for her artwork and writing. In 2012, Rosler presented Meta-Monumental Garage Sale, a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. The exhibition was a large-scale version of the classic American garage sale and visitors had the opportunity to purchase second hand goods arranged by the artist. This project originated while Rosler was at UC San Diego in 1973 with the Monumental Garage Sale she presented at the University Art Gallery.

Coming full-circle, Rosler took the stage at the gallery and led a discussion about her past and present projects focusing on the role of the visitor. The rich history of this exchange was enhanced by an introduction by former department Chair, Professor Emeritus, David Antin. He refers to Rosler as being in the nucleus of the early graduating MFA’s, and “the perfect example of a transmedia artist. She started doing intelligent and meaningful shows in graduate school and even before graduate school.”
Art San Diego Contemporary Art Fair 2012

Kate Clark, Emily Grenader, and Hermione Spriggs consider fairs past and present at the Art San Diego Contemporary Art Fair 2012

Connecting contemporary art with San Diego's early history, graduate students Kate Clark, Emily Grenader, and Hermione Spriggs produced and curated FAIR IS FAIR, an interactive indoor photo booth, for the September 2012 Art San Diego Contemporary Art Fair in Balboa Park.

Art San Diego is a non-profit organization that brings together San Diego artists, universities, galleries, museums and other constituents of the art scene. The fair's theme was [COLLIDE], and it filled Balboa Park with installations, performances, multimedia events, exhibits, lectures, and panel discussions.

Clark, Spriggs, and Grenader found rich possibilities in connecting the boosterism and spectacle behind the 1915 Panama-California Exposition—celebrating Balboa Park's opening and the completion of the Panama Canal—with this new contemporary art exhibition nearly 100 years later.

FAIR IS FAIR was both serious and humorous. Visitors to the FAIR IS FAIR booth had the opportunity, courtesy of green screen technology and live postcard printing, to don handmade period costumes and see themselves against lesser-known historical backgrounds of Balboa Park and San Diego. As part of its then-and-now concept there were images of the Army's occupation of the Panama Canal in Balboa Park during World War II, an early Franciscan monk padre alongside today's baseball mascot at the Padres' stadium; images from the nudist colony of Zoro Gardens in Balboa Park; and images of Mexican and Filipino boxers. The images present a "clash of two postcolonial societies" and portray the intersections between the two cultures.

In a converted automotive garage, Daniel Rehn and Adam Robezzoli are creating the LA Game Space for video game development. The space is open to the public, and research. They expect to open in late 2013 or early 2014.

"LA Game Space is a nonprofit center for exploring the potential and expanding the possibilities of video games through exhibitions, talks and workshops, artist residencies, and research labs," said Rehn, an MFA candidate.

Housed in an early 20th century building, the 11,000-square-foot (think five or six tract houses) center brings fresh juice to the downtown Los Angeles arts district alongside the Los Angeles River. The neighborhood is a vibrant mix of project spaces, residential living, and traditional industrial warehouses and is often used for television and film shoots.

Laid out with an open floor plan, LA Game Space will include a main gallery for large exhibitions, a smaller gallery, a stage and seating with video recording and streaming capabilities, workshop tables for classes and other community activities, and work spaces for each resident artist.

Artists will apply for residencies with an emphasis on experimental, non-commercial work generally not supported by mainstream foundations and donors. LA Game Space is a fringe venture. It was launched through a successful Kickstarter campaign that raised $335,657, well over its goal of $250,000.

Already, LA Game Space is capturing the attention not only of gaming pioneers, but of national media such as Forbes magazine. Many artists and entrepreneurs dream about projects that will have an impact in the world, and Rehn and Robezzoli are making it happen.

LA Game Space will include a main gallery for large exhibitions, a smaller gallery, a stage and seating with video recording and streaming capabilities, workshop tables for classes and other community activities, and work spaces for each resident artist.
Inspired by San Diego’s cultural diversity, MFA alumna Doris Bittar has opened Protea Gallery in North Park. Bittar is committed to giving voice to various and distinct communities and this is reflected in the mission of the gallery. Through her involvement in recent international exhibitions and biennials, Bittar exhibits the work of artists who are part of burgeoning art scenes in cities such as Cairo, Madrid, Dubai, Delhi, Beirut, Amman, Lahore, Berlin, Paris, and London. On December 7, 2012 the gallery presented its first exhibition Protean, which showcased regional and international artists.

The name Protea is a type of flower that is native to South Africa, but also thrives in the San Diego climate. Protea flowers are sold at Protea, a frequent exhibitor to the San Diego arts community when he launched Agitprop, a reimagined gallery that focuses on long term engagement projects. White founded Agitprop in 2007 and for the last six years he has collaborated with a number of individuals with the aim of blurring the lines between the artist, studio, gallery, and neighborhood. A couple major initiatives from Agitprop included co-curating the Summer Salon Series at the San Diego Museum of Art as well as hosting and planning events as the artist collaborative There Goes the Neighborhood. White has recently relocated from North Park to a space in Architect Hector Perez’s new building, La Esquina, in Barrio Logan. “In many ways this decision was predicated on conversations and the potential for future collaborations with Hector (and many others) in hopes of establishing a new, long term, space of artistic experimentation and interdisciplinary investigations.” White states that “you can expect reinvigorated projects as we settle in a new home.”

Art history Professor Kuaii Shen has been awarded the 2013 Book Prize in the Humanities for his book The Scorsese of Asia. Shen’s research and teaching interests include secular art of the Middle Ages, medieval theology, and art theory. In 2000, Professor Lesley Stern joined the visual arts faculty in 1975. Gorin’s installation “The Rain House” lives permanently the New Children’s Museum in Downtown San Diego. He has a BFA in painting and an MFA in photography from the National College of Art and Design in Dublin and the California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts) respectively. While at Cal Arts he began work on a project entitled, “It’s Not about a Salary…Rap, Race, and Resistance in Los Angeles which was subsequently published by Verso Books in 1983. It was nominated as a Rolling Stone Music Book of the Year and made the New Musical Express critics best music book of the year list. His art practice pushes beyond the boundaries of painting and photography. Visual arts Professor Louis Hock states that “Cross acclaimed 2000-2009 series——Keepintime, Brasilltime and Timeless——both documents musicians and creates an innovative space in which music cultures are able to collaborate and reveal their interconnected histories. One of the most interesting characteristics of these videos is the way that the subjects, through their collaboration with Cross, generate new musical territory that not only informs the video viewers, they also reveal latent ideas and histories to the participating musicians themselves.”

Hock also notes that Cross has a strong potential to contribute to diversity on campus. “His decades of impressive research work with African American musical communities and their links to international musical traditions offer profound possibilities for promoting diverse ideas in our University community.”

Congratulations to the following graduates of the MFA and Ph.D. Program:

MFA:
- Joshua Aaron
- Jiyong Park
- Miguel Martínez
- Samuel Koronic
- Scott Lyne
- Rachel Martin
- Vanessa Rovente
- Véronique Télésphore

Ph.D.:
- Daniel Schick
- Sarah Krieger
- Peter Lipton
- Rebecca Dimierz
- Lea Cluff
- Keri Bart

To view a complete list of accomplishments from the Ph.D. student body please visit: visarts.ucsd.edu/phd-achievements

The department welcomes Brian Cross as the newest addition to the faculty.

Video maker and cultural producer Brian Cross (aka B+) brings his talent and enthusiasm to UC San Diego this fall. Cross is a media artist and will serve as an assistant professor in experimental digital cinematics. He has a BFA in painting and an MFA in photography from the National College of Art and Design in Dublin and the California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts) respectively. While at Cal Arts he began work on a project entitled, “It’s Not about a Salary…Rap, Race, and Resistance in Los Angeles which was subsequently published by Verso Books in 1983. It was nominated as a Rolling Stone Music Book of the Year and made the New Musical Express critics best music book of the year list. His art practice pushes beyond the boundaries of painting and photography. Visual arts Professor Louis Hock states that “Cross acclaimed 2000-2009 series——Keepintime, Brasilltime and Timeless——both documents musicians and creates an innovative space in which music cultures are able to collaborate and reveal their interconnected histories. One of the most interesting characteristics of these videos is the way that the subjects, through their collaboration with Cross, generate new musical territory that not only informs the video viewers, they also reveal latent ideas and histories to the participating musicians themselves.”

Hock also notes that Cross has a strong potential to contribute to diversity on campus. “His decades of impressive research work with African American musical communities and their links to international musical traditions offer profound possibilities for promoting diverse ideas in our University community.”
The stellar quality of our academic community is key to the success of the Department of Visual Arts. Our program is one of the few that combines its M.F.A. and Ph.D. programs in a single scholarly and artistic community—a community where exchange and dialogue between art practitioners, historians, and critics is openly encouraged. But we can’t maintain that community without the resources to recruit the best and brightest students. Your gifts are needed to help promising graduate students study and pioneer new creative territory. By offering competitive fellowships, scholarships, and awards, the Department of Visual Arts will be able to encourage and enable talented scholars and artists to excel. Your gifts will provide the opportunity to establish a lasting legacy at UC San Diego.

**Scholarships and Fellowships**

Our location within a major research university provides an intellectual context quite different from that found at private art schools. Faculty and students engage with a diverse range of research methodologies and disciplinary specializations, regularly collaborating with colleagues across the performing and literary arts, social sciences, cognitive sciences, engineering, and urban studies, as well as with practitioners in the larger regional community. Students explore new disciplinary methods and often complement individual research with collaborative and public outreach projects. They are encouraged to push the boundaries of their chosen medium and to reach across media-specific boundaries into new forms of scholarly and artistic pursuit.

While our program is known for our unique concentration of faculty concerned with the production, criticism, and analysis of contemporary art, we are also understood as a nexus for innovative research that bridges artistic practice with forms of intellectual inquiry and creative production in the sciences and humanities. We encourage unique combinations of studio, media, and performance practices along with unique forms of scholarship that combine traditional print-based forms with multi-modal or practice-based components. We encourage combinatory forms that link the studio, the library, and the laboratory, on-site work and in-field work.

At the SME building, we now maintain an entirely new complex of facilities and research centers. The organizing influence of this complex is the Bauhaus, the most influential modern art school of the 20th century, one whose approach to teaching, and understanding art's relationship to society and technology, had a major impact in Europe and the United States. The Bauhaus was shaped by 19th and early 20th century trends which had sought a reconciliation of the fine arts and the applied arts—to reunite creativity and manufacturing, aesthetics and functionality. Following in the path of this school, one of our main objectives is to bring together visual arts, design, and engineering—engaging in dialogue and collaboration with researchers working in nanotechnology, materials science, computer visualization, sensing, and structural engineering, exploring the interplay between design and fabrication methods, material forms, applied sciences, and cultural practices.

**The Visual Arts + Engineering Complex**

The Visual Arts + Engineering Complex encompasses most of our facilities on the 1st and 2nd floor of the SME building. It includes a Gallery, Fabrication Lab, 4 Research Production Studios, 1 Residency Studio, and 6 Graduate Studios. This is a complete complex for research, production, and presentation, bringing together faculty and student work, as well as residencies, in a complete environment for new generation thinking about material art practices, including experimental drawing, painting, and sculpture, and advanced structures and materials. The key element of this complex is a Fabrication Lab equipped with an advanced Robotic Milling System whose specialized tooling and software systems allow the full-scale design and production of complex, 3-dimensional forms. Through this endeavor we aim to take a leading role in the revolution that is occurring in approach to materials. This revolution is led in part by technologies of rapid prototyping and 3D printing, as well as those of embedded computing—leading to an understanding that computational processes do not stand outside of materials, but directly intervene in them, to the extent that we can now speak of materials as computing materials. It is also led by debates in the visual arts, humanities, and social sciences around new theories and philosophies of materiality, frameworks that consider material agency as the effect of ad hoc configurations of human and nonhuman forces, in ways that challenge conventional ontological categories. Sponsorship includes Visual Arts and Engineering Collaboration Production Fund (Provides seed money for collaborative research, residencies, exhibitions, outreach events, and other means of forging new collaborations between engineering and the visual arts); Fabrication Lab IFund for outfitting Lab to advance innovations in artistic sculpture by faculty and students using advanced robotic equipment, lasers, 3D printing, and other advanced methods; 5 Graduate Fellowships; and a Residency Fellowship.

**Friends of Visual Arts: Ivan and Elaine Kamil**

Dr. Ivan and Elaine Kamik have established the Adam Douglas Kamik Media Award in memory of their son, who was a visual arts major at UC San Diego when he passed away in December 2009. The prize is intended to help undergraduates polish their skills in media production and help them realize their creative potential in this field.

“We have established the Adam Douglas Kamik Student Media Award in our son’s memory, especially as a tribute to his creativity and to his belief in the power of the media to connect people,” explained Elaine Kamik.

The Kamik family first became affiliated with UC San Diego when Adam was an undergraduate, where he found a welcoming community and thrived under the guidance of stellar faculty. The Kamiks believe that the university is a top notch educational and research institution that works to foster its students’ creativity in the arts and in the sciences. The balance is the key.

“We hope that through this award, Adam’s creative spirit will inspire others to develop their talents and to grow as sympathetic and sensitive individuals,” she said. “We believe that memorial prizes are a tangible way to keep the spirits of our loved ones alive.”

The Kamiks direct their charitable donations to causes and institutions that they believe in, particularly to those environmental and educational institutions that give priority to preserving the planet and to helping young people develop to their full potential.

“We would encourage others to donate to UC San Diego because of the university’s strength and commitment to excellence in education and research, and to the university’s commitment to growing the student body into enlightened, empathic citizens,” added Elaine.

“Truly, the donors benefit at least as much as the recipients.”

On behalf of UC San Diego, we would like to thank the Kamiks for creating this opportunity for visual arts students.