The year 1945 was pivotal for UA and the art department. After Congress passed the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (better known as the “GI Bill”) at the end of World War II, schools around the country, including The University of Alabama, prepared for a large influx of new students as soldiers returned. In 1945, newly hired professor Richard Zoellner established a printmaking concentration in art at Alabama, one of only two schools in the Southeast that offered it. Also, that year, the department began to offer the professional degree for artists: the Bachelor of Fine Arts. In September of 1945, amidst other announcements about higher education across the nation, the New York Times ran a short notice:

“Recognizing the growing demand for professional training in art in addition to the art program generally offered by Southern colleges on a cultural basis, the University of Alabama has instituted a curriculum leading to the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts. The university, which plans to erect a new Fine Arts building after the war, is setting up temporary headquarters for the enlarged department. There will be five studios, two classrooms, six offices and a large gallery.”

Pictured above is a painting from 1965 by UA art alumna BARBARA PENNINGTON (BFA 1955, MA 1957) titled Selma, inspired by voting rights protests the same year in that city. Read the full story on page 7.
ART AMBASSADORS
Encouraging Students by Example

This year, Martha Sears cultivated a new crop of Art Ambassadors. Art and art history majors KATHRYN BORNHOFT, KELBY COX, CHARLA DAVIS, ERIN HEIN, RACHEL JONES, KATHERINE LANGNER, AMANDA MILLER and JULIA STEWART greeted and gave tours to potential students, parents and other visitors. Our ambassadors introduced themselves at the Majors Fair and Get on Board Day and participated in Homecoming festivities on the main quad. These students share an enthusiasm for art and a desire to “give back” before they embark on their next life stage. Some, like Rachel Jones, think it is important to let prospective students know how valuable “the traditional university” experience can be. Jones, from Knoxville, is a BFA track major with a minor in the Blount Undergraduate Initiative program (BUI). Erin Hein, a double major in art history and biochemistry (and a minor in the BUI program) from Wheaton, Illinois, “loves” her experience in the department and wants to share that with potential students. Amanda Miller, from Cullman, is on a BFA track with a concentration in painting. Studio major Charla Davis, from Birmingham, is concentrating in digital media with a double minor in BUI and art history. Julia Stewart, also from Birmingham, is majoring in art history with a minor in Spanish. Kelby Cox is a double major in art history and studio art with a concentration in ceramics. Cox recently added a minor in Italian and graduated this spring, in three years! Katherine Langner, from San Francisco, will graduate in August with a double major in art history and public relations. Kathryn Bornhoft, from Los Angeles, is a BFA track major with a concentration in sculpture and ceramics.

An Array of Career Choices in Art

The variety of career plans among our ambassadors is dizzying, proof of the wide-ranging possibilities for studio art and art history majors. Hein plans to go into art conservation. Miller wants to teach high school art and then go into arts administration. Davis aims to be a graphic designer. After she earns an MFA in illustration, Jones says “my dream job is working as a concept artist, designing for video games or graphic novels.” Stewart says that she will “pursue a career in art galleries.” Cox is applying to graduate school in art history and hopes to go into museum work. Langner wants to work for an art auction company. Bornhoft plans to go to graduate school and then into teaching. Bornhoft’s words sum up quite well the driving force of all of these young women: “art as an experience enriches life at all levels and is something that should be accessible everywhere.”

AROUND THE QUAD
Woods Quad Dedication

In the 1870s, Woods Quad was a drill field; in the 1970s it was a hangout for students and faculty. Since the mid 1990s, Woods Quad has been home to a growing number of outdoor sculptures, some definitely temporary, some possibly permanent. This past summer, Dean of Arts and Sciences Robert Olin officially dedicated the quadrangle as the Woods Quad Sculpture Garden. Billy Lee’s Homage to Brancusi has made the southeast corner of the little quad its home since the sculpture won the 1993 Alabama Biennial Purchase Award. Since then, alumni artists Joe McCrea-
Ceramics graduate student Sydney Ewerth’s work was recently accepted into a national juried exhibition, Graphic Clay: A Survey of Illustrated, Printed, and Innovative Surfaces, at Baltimore Clayworks (MD) with juror Jason Bige Burnett. Ewerth’s ceramic work was also accepted into a new national juried competition: the First Annual Dirty South Mug Competition at the River Oaks Square Arts Center in Alexandria, Louisiana. More about Sydney Ewerth here: http://wp.me/p4Zowu-2xe

MFA candidate Claire Lewis Evans has been a whirlwind of activity. Lewis Evans was awarded Best Three-Dimensional Artwork for her paper and bamboo sculpture Messenger and for her paper and reed sculpture Satellite in the online exhibition Chasing the Light (Finding the Shadow) at the virtual Still Point Art Gallery. She presented her MFA exhibition, Passages, at Northport’s The Grocery in April. The sculptural works featured in this show reflect Lewis Evans’ interest in material, process and time. Her explorations of form and space allow her to help create the universe, shaping matter and experience as the work unfolds. While her work can be approached by the viewer simply as abstract
Spring semester in the Sella-Granata Art Gallery...

After an interactive exhibition by video artist Erin Colleen Johnson, Master of Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts shows and the BA Senior Exhibition, *EXIT 2015*, dominated our spring semester schedule in the Woods Hall gallery. See more: [http://art.ua.edu/gallery/sgg/](http://art.ua.edu/gallery/sgg/)
...and in galleries around West Alabama.

The UA Gallery in the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center, Harrison Galleries in downtown Tuscaloosa and The Grocery on Main Avenue in Northport (started by three of our alumni) are frequent venues for exhibitions by our students. More photos here: https://www.flickr.com/photos/uaart/collections/72157623555959241/
New Curation Area for the Permanent Collection

The new curation area for the Sarah Moody Gallery of Art’s Permanent Collection opened in the fall with an open house and reception sponsored by the Office of the Dean. With the support of the College of Arts and Sciences, The University of Alabama and the Farley Moody Galbraith Support Fund, 1,880 square feet of curation and storage facilities have been added for our expanding collection of Modern and Contemporary art. Both flat file and vertical storage capabilities have been enhanced with state-of-the-art storage and updated climate control systems. Future developments include enlarging the area where the gallery staff prepare works for exhibits and service works in the collection to add to their stability and safekeeping. A recent addition is the William and Sara Hall Collection (see page 11). Read more about the Permanent Collection here: http://art.ua.edu/smga/past-present-and-future-the-smga-permanent-collection/.

S A R A H  M O O D Y  2 0 1 4 - 2 0 1 5
EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Exhibitions coordinator Vicki Rial (left) gives a tour of Redefining the Multiple: 13 Japanese Printmakers in September; Richmond Burton, Architectural Yellow in Alabama Oval; Susanne Doremus, Body, in Urban Virtue with Cora Cohen; Astri Snodgrass, In a moment of temporary blindness, with detail inset, from her MFA exhibition VERSO | RECTO; Minor White, Schoodic Point, Maine, 1967, donated by Pamela and Michael Murray, from Contemporary Treasures (our annual Permanent Collection show); and Richard Ross, three works from Juvenile-in-Justice.
In November, Rachel Stephens received one of two “Educator of the Year” awards from the Tuscaloosa County Preservation Society, for her efforts to teach students about the importance of nineteenth-century architecture. The society’s president, Ian Crawford, recognized her for her work educating students about the history of architecture both in Tuscaloosa and the state of Alabama. In 2014 she organized field trips to historic structures, led research projects about local architecture and organized a digital database of historic Alabama structures to which her students contributed. Stephens was also selected by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) as the 2015 recipient of the President’s Faculty Research Award for Arts & Sciences - Humanities for excellence in her field.

This fall, Bryce Speed’s mixed media paintings were exhibited with works by sculptor Jack King in a two-person show at Valdosta State University. Works by Speed and Matt Mitros were featured in Paper or Plastic? at The Grocery in Northport this fall and new works are featured there in May.


“Whether students go on to become curators, engineers or ad executives, in the ‘real world’ one needs to know how to research a problem, analyze relevant data and present findings in a clear and cogent way. This project is designed to aid students in building those skills.” — Dr. Tanja L. Jones in Dialog

In October, Lucy Curzon, director of education and outreach for the Paul R. Jones Collection of American Art at UA, spoke to students from Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary and Westlawn Middle schools at the PRJ Gallery as part of the gallery’s inaugural K-12 Fellows program. After a ribbon-cutting by A&S Dean Robert Olin, Curzon talked to students about how to look at and think about the art in the gallery before they went back to their classrooms to make their own art. More photos here: https://www.flickr.com/photos/uaart/sets/72157648130194349

Read about our Honors Day Awardees online: http://art.ua.edu/resources/newsletter-the-loupe/

sculpture, it is deeply informed by her longstanding interest in spirituality and the environment, as well as more recent reflections on the fragility and resiliency of art and life in the face of the unknown. More here: http://clairelewisevans.com/
THE HUMANITY OF ART

As part our 70th anniversary commemoration of the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, we are recognizing some of our alumni who have received the degree. Stories and images from our BFA alumni are found on pages 10-12. Following is a compelling and timely story about one of them.

Barbara Pennington (BFA 1955, MA 1957) dedicated her life to painting and art education until her death in 2013. From teaching art therapy to Bryce Hospital patients to her provocative paintings of the Civil Rights Movement to her later intensely colored abstract works, Pennington always expressed compassion for humanity through her art.

Pennington grew up in Tuscaloosa and attended Tuscaloosa High School. She won a four-year full scholarship to UA from the National Scholastic Art Awards and received her BFA and MA in painting and printmaking. After graduation, she taught in public schools in Alabama, lived in New York from 1960 and then moved to Connecticut in 1968 where her high school students received many state art awards. In 1977 she returned to Alabama and set up her studio and an antique business in Gordo. Pennington was a member of the Crossroads Arts Alliance, a group of artists in and around Gordo that included the late GLENN HOUSE, Sr. (BFA 1957) (see The Loupe Back Page).

In 1957, while working on her master’s degree, the Tuscaloosa News ran a story on April 23 about her work teaching art to Bryce Hospital patients “44 hours a week.” Pennington’s Bryce students mirrored widespread attitudes about abstract and non-figurative art at the time: “At first they thought it was ridiculous,” she said in the interview, “and now they won’t do anything else.” The article explained the students’ change of heart: “With abstract art, they paint emotionally rather than technically and therefore are not imposed upon by the restrictions of realistic art.” Later her writing about her own work revealed a similar approach for herself, “My aim is for the work to be experienced in an unconscious way, bypassing the analytical and going straight to pure feeling—to a sense of beauty and joy.”

Abstract art was Pennington’s purview and her preference. However, a few times, she felt strongly enough about her subject to change her nonfigurative approach. When she passed away at the age of 81, she left behind a studio full of paintings and a legacy that has become more than she ever imagined. After Pennington’s death, her niece, Vicki Moreland, and Moreland’s husband found previously unknown and rare figurative works by the artist. The largest painting, Selma, 9 feet wide by 6 feet high, has become well regarded in the short time since the Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina, announced its acquisition of the work (see page one).

An Exceptional Painting

While living in New York City in the 1960s, Pennington made at least three figurative paintings about the tumultuous and horrifying events going on in Alabama during that time. In Selma, painted after the 1965 voting rights marches, she contrasted the solemn demonstrators emerging from a church with the violent police beatings of citizens in the streets and a giant, ghostlike Ku Klux Klan figure menacing over all. The painting’s monumental size and the stylization of its figures enhances its iconic character. Pennington painted a slightly smaller canvas, Riot, about five feet wide, after the Watts Riots in Los Angeles that occurred just a few months later. At the time, they were the worst race riots the country had ever experienced. She also made an abstract painting titled Selma March and at least one drawing after a bombing in Birmingham.

Recently, we exchanged emails with Pennington’s niece, Vicki Moreland, a freelance writer and the executor of Pennington’s estate. This is an excerpt from our questions and her responses in which she says more about her aunt’s art:

LOUPE: Do you know if [your aunt] was making abstract work at the [same] time that she painted Selma and the painting, Riot?

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE
Did she change to a figurative style because that was the best way she found to express her ideas; or was she painting in that style and changed to abstract later on? Have you ever found any other figurative works from that same time?

MORELAND: There are a few other figurative works from that time frame, such as the self-portrait on her website, but she worked primarily in abstract before Selma and Riot. My mother [Pennington’s sister] and I believe that Selma was painted first and Riot later. I also know that she did an abstract representation, Selma March. That painting was found in New York and [was] believed to be rent payment for an apartment she had there. It is distinctly different from Selma and Riot. I can’t speak to the reasons she chose a figurative style for these paintings, but I suspect it was the best way to clearly represent her feelings on the subject. In the ’70s she started painting impressionistic landscapes inspired by her travels to the Southwest and Midwest, her garden, and the landscapes of Alabama. But she returned to abstracts in the ’80s with a series of mixed media works, watercolors (her Earth Auras), oils and oil pastels. I believe in time she began to prefer abstract to other styles because it allowed her to express freely her feelings about art.

LOUPE: Have you ever found any writing by Barbara about her early paintings? Did she ever talk to you about her feelings about the Civil Rights Movement?

MORELAND: Unfortunately, I don’t have any writing by her about her early paintings, nor did she ever talk to me about the Civil Rights Movement. I have heard from others that to discuss her painting Selma was sometimes a somber experience. She also talked about the Freedom Riders, and I believe these events saddened her. I have a rough sketch she did entitled Birmingham Bombing, of a cross, buried in the rubble of the church, and a body on the ground. I do not believe that she ever painted this scene. We did discuss Riot and she commented that subconsciously she created the buildings without windows or doors and believed it to be a commentary on the lack of opportunity for the young men in the painting. They were “trapped” figuratively and literally on the campus.

ALUMNI NEWS

BFAers Since 1945


BILL HALL (BFA 1973) has already made an impression on the SMGA’s Permanent Collection (Loupe Spring 2011). As Master Printer at Pace Prints in New York for almost 30 years, he has had unparalleled access to renowned artists making exquisite work. Over the years, he built a collection that he and his wife have now donated to the Sarah Moody Gallery of Art’s Permanent Collection, already a formidable gathering of the work of internationally acclaimed artists. Selections from the William and Sara Hall Collection of Contemporary Prints will be on exhibit through June 10 in the UA Gallery downtown in the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center.

JENNY FINE (BFA 2006) has come back home to Alabama with her latest installation performance project, Flat Granny and Me: A Procession in My Mind. Its latest incarnation was a lecture and performance in January at the Wiregrass Museum of Art in Dothan.

Fine uses performance, photography, installation to create and tell stories about her family and her childhood experiences. Flat Granny and Me has been more than a yearlong project with Flat Granny, a life-sized photographic costume of her grandmother.
Fine writes, “A Procession in My Mind is a collision of the agricultural history of my hometown of Enterprise (“City of Progress” and home to the Boll Weevil Monument) with my family’s present day relationship to the landscape of our south Alabama farm. This live theatrical performance and room-sized diorama began as a re-imagining of the year my grandmother was named Enterprise, Alabama’s ‘Woman of the Year.’”

After receiving the MFA from The Ohio State University, Fine served as studio assistant for Ann Hamilton, artist-in-residence in Dresden, Germany, and at The Wellington School in Columbus, Ohio. She has also taught in China and worked at an orphanage and women’s shelter in Nigeria. She lives near Enterprise, where she keeps a studio.

JEFFREY BYRD (BFA 1987) is professor and chair of the Department of Art at the University of Northern Iowa. A video and performance artist, he exhibits and performs around the world, from Lincoln Center to Beijing. This year he performed in Berlin, Salt Lake City and a little town in Poland. He writes, “My recent work is inspired by my job as an administrator. This piece [pictured this page] attempts to elevate the mundane tools of office work (Post It Notes) to the level of visual poetry. In the performance, I write beautiful words from many languages on the notes and hang them on a glass surface (in this case it was a glass elevator at the SLC Public Library). Viewers are invited to share their beautiful words as well. I’ve done this piece in Toronto, Boston and Helsinki, so I’ve collected a great list of words!”

The prolific MARTHA MARKLINE HOPKINS’ (BFA 2004) painting Corinthian White was chosen for the online gallery exhibition Dark sponsored by Arc Gallery, San Francisco. Her Pink Moire was chosen for the exhibition Voices: An Artist’s Perspective, Women’s Caucus for Art, NYC. She lives in Fairhope.

In the Spring/Summer 2012 issue, we published a photo by LARRY NEWBERRY (BFA 1975, MFA 1977) of a group of art students in Woods Quad. Only one person remained unidentified - until now! JAN HOLLAND KIMBROUGH (BFA 1974), then known as JAN HURSTON HOLLAND, was that person and she sent us an update: Holland came to UA in 1970, like Barbara Pennington, on a 4-year scholarship from Scholastic. “It was kind of a big deal because there were no fellowships, foundations or endowments for art students like there are today. Art was not a mainstream field of study and art students were understood even less! I have had an exciting art career working for Occidental Petroleum Corporation in Tulsa, as assistant art director for Horizon Magazine (a national fine arts magazine published in Tuscaloosa) and a free-lance business, Holland Studios. In 1990, I began work for a degree in medical social work and earned an MSW from the university in 1992 and had a 10-year career as a hospice social worker with Montclair Hospice and a case manager at Lakeshore Rehabilitation Hospital, both in Birmingham.” Holland emphasizes the value of an education in art: “It taught me to think ‘outside the box’ and to creatively problem solve even in a totally different work setting.”

In late breaking news, BFA graduating senior ALEXANDRA (ALI) HVAL was awarded one of only ten nationwide Windgate Fellowships this year. Her “Art taught me to think ‘outside the box’ and to creatively problem solve even in a totally different work setting.”

— JAN HOLLAND KIMBROUGH, BFA 1974
sculpture, Genesis, is pictured above. Other UA alumni awardees are Adam Hill in 2012 and Jenny Fine in 2006, both BFA graduates. More in the next issue and online.

We have more alumni stories on our website. Read them here: http://art.ua.edu/loupe/spring-2015-more-alumni-news/.

Assistant Professor MATT MITROS, instructor and alumna VIRGINIA ECKINGER and representatives from Crimson Clay (and grad students) SYDNEY EWERTH and JOANI INGLETT (all pictured above) attended the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference in Providence, Rhode Island, in April to recruit students. As we go to press, Mitros has just left for Ljubljana, Slovenia, to attend the opening reception of III International Ceramic Triennial Unicum at the National Museum where his work was accepted. His Rubble Trouble Mug won Best in Show in the new juried exhibition MUG Shots at the LUX Center, Lincoln, Nebraska and his work was juried into the 7th Annual Beyond The Brickyard Juried Exhibition at the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena, Montana. His Pre-Columbian Rave was featured in the February 2015 issue of Ceramics Monthly. Currently Mitros and BRYCE SPEED have a two-person exhibition, Paper or Plastic?, at The Grocery on Main Avenue in Northport, Alabama.

The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa awarded Jamey Grimes Visual Arts Educator in its Druid Arts Awards for 2014, recognizing his many contributions to education in the community. Past awardees include Virginia Rembert, Al Sella, Gay Burke and Robert Mellown.

In November, Sky Shineman exhibited new works in the exhibition Seismic Shift at the Arts Council Gallery downtown. Shineman was awarded a research grant by The University of Alabama to investigate new painting materials including powdered pigments and organic mediums. She said these works are “a product of this inquiry, serving as a record of elemental relationships and physical processes.” In the spring of 2014, Shineman’s work was included in 51st Annual Juried Competition at the Masur Museum of Art in Louisiana. The juror was Kelly Shindler, associate curator at the Contemporary Art Museum in St. Louis. Shineman also was juried into 20"x20"x20": National Compact Competition and Exhibition at LSU’s newly renovated Student Union Art Gallery, juried by Shana Barefoot, exhibitions and collections manager for the Museum of Contemporary Art Atlanta.

Enthusiastic reviews for PETE SCHULTE’s one-person exhibition Build a Fire at Atlanta’s Whitespace Gallery in March included Matthew Terrell for Burnaway.org (“a new door in the mind for seeing art”) and Faith McClure for Artsatl.com (“Zen draughtsman”). Schulte will be at Yaddo artists’ retreat this summer.
Earlier this fall, Glenn House, Sr., passed away. Besides being a BFA alumnus of our department and creator of a Tuscaloosa icon (the Moon Winx neon sign in Alberta), House was at the hub of a vibrant network of artists centered in Gordo and reaching far beyond, especially book artists and printmakers, as well as many others. In memory of Glenn House and in honor of his former professor, Gay Burke, who retires from UA in August, we reprint his recollection of his time in Gay Burke’s photography class (and events leading up to it):

In 1989...I received a call from my old bottle-digging psychiatrist-buddy and photographer. Dr. Jim Morris got right to the point, “You need a hobby.” He prescribed that I join him in Gay Burke’s Thursday evening black and white photography class.

I showed up at a following class to check it out. Dr. Jim met me at the door and introduced me to Barbara Lee Black, whose first question made me feel right at home, “Is that your mother who has the museum at Gordo?” Then I met a host of other nice folks. It turned out that Gay Burke (whom I had known for years) had made a practice of accompanying her classes to my mother’s museum to photograph the weirdness. Also in that first class was Kathy Fetters.

I sold a binding press for $250, bought a 35 mm camera, and signed up for an audit. I am not really claustrophobic, but I do need more elbow room than Gay provided for double-left-handed people to download bulk film from canister to cartridge.

Being smarter than your average Alabama redneck, and being fully funded as a college assistant professor, I learned to save a lot of film by paying other students to download my film. I then made the terrifying discovery that my long-suffered darkroom chemical allergy was about to reclaim its former territory, so I paid to have my negatives and prints done as well. When I realized that my continuing to force a total lack of photographic skills onto the photographic world was causing more harm than good, I quietly laid aside my camera.

Gay Burke recognized that I was capable of somehow plucking a positive viewpoint from the most mundane photograph and, being the super-human being that she is, allowed me to continue to participate in classroom critiques. Then, with that certain twinkle and grin, she asked, “Well, Glenn. When are you going to bring some work?”

—GLENN HOUSE, Sr., BFA 1957, MLS 1978, Ed.S. 1983; Assistant Professor Emeritus, Book Arts

Read more about our notable alumni and faculty online: [http://art.ua.edu/alumni/notable-alumni-faculty/](http://art.ua.edu/alumni/notable-alumni-faculty/)