

# Expressions

## Volume 16

**SJSU** | COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND THE ARTS

# Table of Contents

*Come Celebrate Reed Magazine’s 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday!* ..... 2

*Faculty Art Exhibition Captivates Viewers* ..... 4

*Sundance Institute Brings Film to San José*..... 7

*Music Alumna Heads to NYU* ..... 9

*Curiosity Drives Designers*..... 11

*It’s A Dean’s Live Vol. 16* ..... 13

# Come Celebrate Reed Magazine's 150th Birthday!



You may know that SJSU is the oldest public university west of the Mississippi, but did you know we also lay claim to the oldest literary magazine west of Mississippi? Published since 1867, *Reed Magazine* is throwing a blowout bash on September 22 to celebrate 150 years (!) of giving voice to regional, and more recently international, authors of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. This historic event will be held at Morris Dailey Auditorium with a champagne reception in the Bell Rose Garden—and all are invited!

The Gala will feature a welcome by SJSU President Mary Papazian and be emceed by Santa Clara County Poet Laureate Arlene Biala and *Reed's* current editor-in-chief, Cathleen Miller. Entertainment will include music, food, and readings from contributors of the 150th issue. According to Professor Miller, it will be a “celebration worthy of the West's oldest literary journal as we mark our sesquicentennial.”

Only predated by *The Mercury News* as a San José publishing institution, *Reed* traces its history to the late 1860s when the first issue of *The Acorn* was published by the students of California State Normal School. The Normal School eventually became San José State University, the founding institution of the California State University System. *The Acorn* published many writers of the early American West, including Edwin Markham, the first poet laureate of Oregon.

*Reed* has had many names over the years. *The Acorn* became *The Normal School Index* in 1895, which then became *The Normal Pennant* in 1898. In 1920, it became *The Quill* and in 1932, *El Portal*. Finally, in 1948, the journal became *The Reed*, which was later shortened to just *Reed*. The publication is named after James Reed, a survivor of the infamous Donner Party ordeal, who granted the land upon which San José State currently sits.

Professor Miller teaches *Reed* as a two-semester class in the Department of English where students get hands-on experience combing through submissions, editing articles, and seeing the journal through production. Started as a regional journal of California authors, *Reed* has recently expanded online, bringing submissions from

around the world and giving the publication a global footprint. *Reed* also engages in literary outreach to local high schools, bringing local authors to students and holding poetry contests for San José's next generation of writing talent.

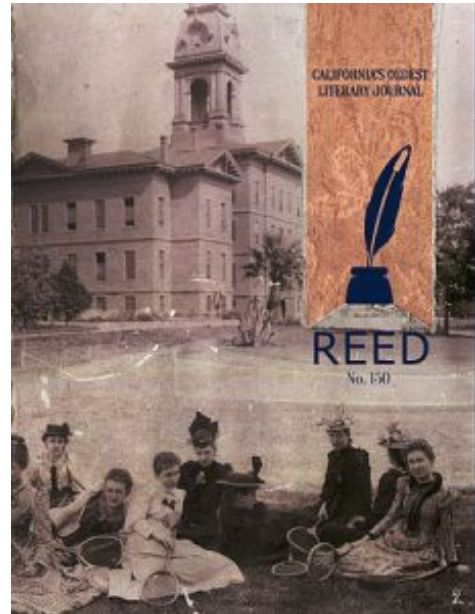
Dr. Miller points out that SJSU events like *Reed Magazine's* 150th Anniversary Gala are perfect occasions for SJSU alumni and Silicon Valley residents to stay connected to the arts and everything that's going on in the community. "In many ways, SJSU is the oldest cultural institution in Silicon Valley," says Dr. Miller. "It makes sense that we continue to be not only a center of intellectual activity, but a contributor to the arts scene here."

"If you haven't been back in a while," Dr. Miller adds, "come back to the university and see what's going on."

The Reed 150th Anniversary Gala is on September 22nd from 7-10pm at the Morris Dailey Auditorium on campus. Tickets are only \$10 and, of course, the anniversary issue will be on sale.

To learn more about the event, visit the Facebook page [here](#).

To check out *Reed Magazine*, please visit [www.reedmag.org](http://www.reedmag.org).



## Faculty Art Exhibition Captivates Viewers

By Olivia Lee



From August 29 to September 29, the Thompson Art Gallery is featuring the Pictorial Arts Faculty Exhibition. This exhibition showcases works by Jason Adkins, Gale Antokal, Irene Carvajal, Robert Chiarito, Donald Feasel, Erik Friedman, Patrick Surgalski, and Matthew Taylor. All currently teach in the Department of Art and Art History.

The exhibition allows students the opportunity to view the personal and professional artwork of their professors.

“It is of significant pedagogical value for students to see this show,” says Professor Jo Farb Hernández, Gallery Director and Curator, “not only because the teacher-scholar model of faculty pursuing work in their fields sets an important example, but because students may discover that their professors’ artwork differ substantively, in aesthetic and technique, from what they teach in the classroom.”

Many pieces in the exhibition exemplify Hernández’s view, particularly Professor Feasel’s work, which Feasel describes as “chance-derived paintings”—paintings that are highly dependent and driven by circumstance. His two acrylic paintings are based on evaporation and veer away from the traditional still-life paintings he produces and teaches in class. He submerged raw canvases in mixtures of water and pigment, draped and let the canvases dry for days, and eventually ended up with shapes that are hard to define.

Feasel considers his method to be “more like setting up a lab where things could happen, but maybe nothing will.” Although his unconventional process does not involve laborious planning through sketches and studies of a subject, his work presents its own set of challenges.

“When I see my own painting, I get this same surprise of someone just walking in would,” Feasel says. Because the results in his painting are often unexpected, Feasel finds it difficult to “care” about his work; thus, he usually ends up with many castaways. “My criteria for keeping a painting is that it has to keep your interest when you look at it,” Feasel says, “but none of this is very rational—something that is not really taught in class.”

While pieces like Feasel’s paintings may uncover a hidden side of a professor’s works to students, the exhibition also reveals “the extremely wide range of

aesthetic, media, and technique that is manifested by the different artists," Hernández says.

Professor Gale Antokal's work, for instance, drastically differs from Feasel's paintings despite being in the same pictorial genre. Although Antokal's pieces are drawings, her work evokes the traditions of drawing, painting, and photography all at once.

"My visual source is frequently photographed at 1/1000 sec. Then, I photoshopped the pictures to obscure fact: day can be changed to night; shapes shift due to fog; and what is seen and obliterated moment by moment, day to day—a fiction of time. This immediacy is laboriously transformed as I draw the resultant work and collage the single frames to create interesting movement," Antokal explains.

Her creative process is interdisciplinary and not at all a typical drawing process. She paints layers of graphite emulsified in mineral spirits onto Yupo synthetic paper. The graphite is then burnished to a mirrored surface. She makes her drawings through the process of erasure, removing the graphite with solvent, scotch tape, and steel wool to reveal light and a range of tone.

"The results are drawings with the look of daguerreotypes, early pictorialist photography, 50s peel-apart polaroids, and most recently, panoramic film strips," says Antokal.

Although the source of her drawings lies in photography, Antokal has obscured the original photos to the point where the images are "no longer facts," allowing her work "to raise the question of what is real and what is perceived as real."

Overall, the artworks by each artist are distinct from one another because the exhibition is not restricted by a theme based on subject or medium. This freedom allows artists to explore different issues through different means.

For instance, Professor Irene Carvajal's two paintings incorporate "mundane, everyday objects" through techniques of screenprinting and monoprinting. "I create collagraphs out of discarded clothing of mass production, and I run them through the press machine," Carvajal says. "I also make screenprints of patterns produced in textile factories



from Bangladesh, Costa Rica, and other countries that participate in mass producing clothing.”

The images in her work are truly ubiquitous, as she even utilizes a clothing iron to burn shapes directly onto her canvas. Carvajal’s method of printmaking allows her to examine the relationship between mass-produced images and the culture of consumerism: "I am interested in looking at value—the value of print, of anything that is mass produced—and what the real value/cost of mass production is, to not just you and me in this globalized economy, but also to the people who are producing these things."

Not all artists in the exhibition, however, ground their work in the materialistic realities of the world. Many artists focus on exploring abstract and aesthetic issues of beauty, artistic composition, and how they relate to the human psyche.

"Under most circumstances, it would be unlikely for these artists and/or works to be curated into the same exhibition due to the range of scale, media, technique, and aesthetic intention," Hernandez says, "but this makes for a terrific academic program as it allows students to learn from a range of viewpoints." Thus, the sheer variety of artwork featured in the gallery makes the exhibition unique and exciting.

So come by the Thompson Art Gallery and see the Pictorial Arts Faculty Exhibition—admission is free and the gallery is open daily.

For more information about the exhibition, visit <http://events.ha.sjsu.edu/art/events/pictorial-arts-faculty-exhibition/>

# Sundance Institute Brings Film to San José

By Lance Wyndon



On Saturday, August 19, the Sundance Institute returned to the Hammer Theatre to host a free workshop entitled “Documentary Filmmaking: Live Case Study.”

It was the Hammer Theatre’s second collaboration with the Sundance Institute, which previously brought a “Short Film Master Class” workshop to the city of San José earlier this

year in April. Collaboration between San José State University and Santa Clara University made the workshop possible, and contributions by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation allowed it to be free to the public.

Sundance Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated toward supporting and facilitating growth of aspiring independent artists through initiatives such as labs, fellowships, and workshops to help them polish their craft. According to the Sundance Institute, their workshops are “open to all artists, and held around the country...offer[ing] participants premium resources and expert advice on topics ranging from screenwriting to digital distribution.”

Another program of the Sundance Institute, the Sundance Film Festival, is critically acclaimed within the United States and is quickly becoming the premier discovery point for many up-and-coming filmmakers across the globe.

Professor Barnaby Dallas, the coordinator for Film and Theatre at SJSU, was contacted earlier this year by former H&A Dean Lisa Vollendorf to help partner with the Sundance Institute and bring these film workshops to the San José community.

“The purpose of the Sundance Institute is for young professionals to get opportunities and exposure before they get into their career,” Dallas says. “As someone who has been a filmmaker for more than twenty years, it is an incredible opportunity.”

SJSU and the Hammer Theatre Center are at the heart of San José and are home to filmmakers and enthusiasts alike. According to Dallas, "Sundance officials praised the Hammer Theatre Center for being such a cutting-edge facility and one of the best venues they've ever visited." In short, it is the ideal location for a workshop.

"Here in the South Bay, there is a huge demand for filmmaking that is not being met. For the first 'Short Master Class' workshop we did little outreach and 400 people still signed up!" Dallas says.

One of the Sundance Institute's core commitments is "to champion the creation of unique work by individual storytellers." Moving into the future, the Sundance Institute would like to see more diversity within the film world by granting opportunities to aspiring filmmakers in typically underrepresented areas.

The success of the venue and the Sundance Institute workshop has paved the way for continual ongoing collaborations between SJSU and Sundance. "They will definitely be back every year," Dallas confirms.

# Music Alumna Heads to NYU

By Olivia Lee



Genevieve Eckel graduated with a Bachelor of Music in Composition last year along with an impressive list of accomplishments. She earned the President's Scholar Award as well as scholarships from San José State University and other programs such as the National League of Pen Women. Genevieve also won the Allen Strange Memorial Composition Prize from the San José Chamber Orchestra.

Her years at SJSU were fruitful and enlightening—she became an expert of music composition, uncovering the intimate details of writing music. Genevieve explains, "I learned to understand the anatomy and role of each instrument in an orchestra, how each pitch relates to others, and how they may form sequences that are meant to establish a concept for the listener."

Other than technical details of her field, her studies helped broaden her perspective of music. "Not only did I learn how to expand my creative horizon, I was influenced to consider a more practical and business-oriented side of composing," Genevieve says. For her, music composition developed from being a personal creative outlet to a prominent career path.

During her undergraduate years, Genevieve got several chances to apply her skills with major clients. She was commissioned to compose a four-movement piece *A Journey, to the Center* for the San José Chamber Orchestra. Her piece premiered live at the Trianon Theatre in San José.

Additionally, a SJSU professor introduced Genevieve to a director and cinematographer, who commissioned her to write a film score for their documentary *The Ambassador of God*. She was in charge of the entire music production: from creating the initial composition, to formatting the scores and their individual parts, to finding and recording her own performers, and to mixing and blending the tracks with instruments. The film score experience gave her a first-hand insight into different facets of composing for film.

In each of her projects, she balanced her creativity with her clients' needs. "Every piece may not be a grand expression of my inner self," Genevieve explains, "but projects to fulfill the appeasements of clients who trust you with their creative expressions are just as satisfying."

Her successes at SJSU were just the beginning for her career. Since graduating, Genevieve continues to thrive in the field of music. Over the summer, she worked as the Music Director and Instrumental Instructor for The Arts Project of Orange County, a private art school in Southern California. She had many responsibilities from marketing, networking, and managing schedules for the music department—all of which gave her a glimpse into the field from an administrative perspective. She also taught a variety of instruments, such as the piano, guitar, and the ukulele.

Her variety of experiences help her determine what she truly wants to do in the music field. “I intend to write music for film, documentaries, TV series, video games, and whatever I can get my hands on,” Genevieve says. In the fall, she will attend New York University to obtain a Master of Music in Scoring for Film and Multimedia to further pursue her dream.

Even though Genevieve is moving on to bigger projects and a new school, she remains grateful to San José State University. She believes that the faculty here is always looking out for each student’s best interest and utmost success. “The music department is like my family,” says Genevieve, “and I will miss them tremendously.”



# Curiosity Drives Designers

By Kristin Lam



Cindy Tsui, an alumna of the Graphic Design Bachelor's of Fine Arts program, describes her approach to her design career and education at SJSU similarly: she's taken time to explore her curiosities.

"I don't see myself as a designer with one focus or specialization—at least not yet," Tsui says. "Currently, I am really into branding. Some might say that's the cheater's way of saying 'all types of design,' but I think that's what excites me—branding touches everything!"

Now a senior brand designer at Hired, Tsui has done many different projects. Some of her previous work includes leading digital marketing projects at Apple and an in-store digital experience for Old Navy. She finds telling meaningful stories about products fun and challenging.

"You really have to think about how all the experiences will come together to evoke an emotional connection, so it requires knowing a bit about product design, marketing, service design, and messaging," Tsui says. "When done well, it can make for some really memorable experiences—and that's my ultimate goal as a designer."

Tsui's design work is driven by people. As a self-described highly empathetic person, Tsui aims to create experiences that improve people's quality of life.

"Whether my design is used to inspire, teach, or redefine the status quo, I want to create things that do good for others," Tsui says.

To her, artistic creativity is the match that sparks ideas and communication is the tinder that grows them. She encourages new designers to remember that "there are no wasted experiences, so don't be afraid to try and fail" and that "unbridled passion is infectious."

When graphic design alumna Elise Granados considers someone to be a creative thinker, she believes they are also a problem solver.



“I think that they are someone that can look at a visual or conceptual problem and address it in different ways, see all the various angles and aspects of how it can be solved,” Granados says. “From a technical standpoint, as well as from a design, emotional, or conceptual standpoint, there’re so many facets of design that we have to consider. And I think creativity is a large part of that.”

At Odopod, she leads digital projects as the Associate Design Director. Granados believes it’s her job to maintain the vision of the project so that the final product is functional, beautiful, and meaningful. She describes project management to be more abstract than technical skills in programs such as Illustrator.

“When you can’t actually have your hands on it yourself, that’s when training your design eye and brain and those skills that you learned in school are really important,” Granados explains. “You have to be able to look at something, understand, and sense that something isn’t quite there yet. And be able to then give feedback of why and what to do next.”

Working in digital design specifically presents what she considers to be a fascinating challenge: thinking of the larger user experience. Along the user journey, Granados says that design, product, and, interface should change and speak to the user in different ways. Connected scenarios, multiple entry points, and how people plan to use it need to be considered.

Granados still finds learning about a wide variety of subjects to be one of the most exciting aspects of design. In order to create meaningful work for clients—whether it’s a long- or short-term project on luxury watches or multiple sclerosis—developing understanding and expertise inspires her.

“If you’re a curious person, if you’re someone who is interested in learning different aspects of the world and life and how they work, then that’s one of the cool benefits of this career,” Granados says. “You really get that exposure. For me, those types of projects—something where I can learn something new, stretch my brain, and do something different than I’ve done before—is something that I’m always looking for.”

# It's A Dean's Life Vol. 16

September 2017



Last week, I was discussing *John Steinbeck's Travels with Charlie: in Search of America* with faculty and friends. We were brainstorming how this text could inspire our students and fellow citizens to re-imagine our collective American journey to discover this nation's collective values.

Sitting with colleagues in the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies drew together so many wonderful things about our college: the generosity of our donors, such as former faculty member Martha Heasley Cox, who recently donated more than \$4.8 million to support scholarship and burgeoning writers through the center she founded; our committed faculty, who strive every day to make our students more intellectually and ethically engaged; and our community friends who recognize the good that we do as an institution and help us achieve our goals. This is one of many joyful moments in a dean's life.

This fall, San José State welcomed 4,500 freshmen and 4,500 new transfer students to campus—the largest entering class in the university's history. We are working diligently to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and relationships they need to excel in their course work and their lifelong careers.

And we do a great job of this, providing our students an extraordinary AND affordable education. I am so proud that SJSU has been ranked 7th in the United States at raising graduates' standard of living by a recent study.

In the College of Humanities and the Arts, we prepare our students to be creators, thinkers, and innovators. This issue of Expressions highlights those successes, such as Genevieve Eckel, whose training in the Music program prepared her for her graduate studies at NYU.

Our ability to provide top-notch arts education is supported by our faculty. Last year, two of our faculty, Brian Belet of the School of Music and Dance and Persis Karim of the English and Comparative Literature Department, were awarded the highly competitive President's Scholar and the Outstanding Professor awards. When our faculty and students collaborate together, the results are amazing. This year,

Reed Magazine celebrates 150 years. It is the oldest literary magazine west of the Mississippi, and it is produced by our own students working with a faculty advisor.

That same energy of talented students and committed faculty results in amazing arts performances, such as the second annual Kaleidoscope showcase by the School of Music and Dance on October 21 and *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* produced by the Department of Film and Theater on November 3 - 10.

With the world-class Hammer Theatre Center as a venue for our best student actors, writers, singers, and dancers, we power creativity at San José State and in the Silicon Valley.

We embody the values of the humanities and the arts, and we make our students' dreams come true. We invite you to join us this fall for performances, lectures, art exhibits, and literary readings to see the power of the arts in action.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shannon Miller', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end of the final stroke.

Shannon Miller