Re-Engage, Re-Define, Re-Imagine

According to Rebecca Ness (CFA'15), painting fabrics, attire, and the people behind them is a way to explore the ways in which “people curate themselves and what they want to communicate to the world.” At the beginning of a year characterized by growth and evolution at the CFA, this issue of Spark dives right in with stories focused on themes of embracing transitions, taking risks, and defining identities, as individuals and as a community.

Read about artists, performers, and composers whose work is bursting at the seams of expression—both figuratively and literally—from the BU Art Gallery to the newly imagined Studio ONE. Join current students on their own journeys of self-exploration around the world, from stages of Berlin and Carnegie Hall to sketch-writing studios in LA and galleries in Chelsea. The CFA community is characterized by purposeful makers and passionate minds, and they're ready to share their stories.

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Snapshot of Summer

CFA students spend the summer playing, making, thinking, performing, and doing.

by Emily White

Whether they stay around campus or travel across the world, CFA students spend their time between semesters creating, learning, playing, conducting, and engaging in work that informs and broadens the scope of their studies.

The typical student at the College of Fine Arts is anything but typical, and students’ summer breaks are just as unique as their interests. They fill their summers with creative internships, interdisciplinary work, and enriching jobs that enhance their studies. Several students from across the College sent Spark snapshots of their summers for a glimpse into their lives and work. See more work from our student artists throughout the year by following CFA on Instagram (@buarts) and Snapchat (myCFA).
Several students participated in SongFest 2017 in Los Angeles, which immerses students in art song and performance through master classes, coachings, lessons, concerts, and lecture/workshops. SongFest is an annual performance event that highlights the work of emerging artists in the field of art song. The festival provides a platform for students to collaborate with renowned artists and gain valuable experience in the art song community.

## Caroline Bourg (CFA'20)
**Major:** Vocal Performance

"SongFest was a fantastic experience. It was my first time experiencing a such a diverse group of artists and repertoire. The master classes and lessons were incredibly beneficial, and the opportunity to perform with different pianists was invaluable. I feel that SongFest has provided me with the tools and confidence to continue pursuing my passion for art song."

## Regan Siglin (CFA'18)
**Major:** Collaborative Piano

"SongFest was a wonderful experience. It was my first time performing with such a diverse range of artists and repertoire. The master classes and lessons were incredibly beneficial, and the opportunity to perform with different pianists was invaluable. I feel that SongFest has provided me with the tools and confidence to continue pursuing my passion for art song."

## Victoria Lawal (CFA'18)
**Major:** Vocal Performance

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## Dani Drinoff (CFA'18)
**Major:** Piano

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## Dominick Dinstman (CFA'18)
**Major:** Painting

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SongFest is an annual performance event that highlights the work of emerging artists in the field of art song. The festival provides a platform for students to collaborate with renowned artists and gain valuable experience in the art song community. The festival is open to students from around the world and attracts a diverse range of performers and repertoire. SongFest is an important event for students who are interested in pursuing a career in art song and provides a unique opportunity to connect with other students and professionals in the field.
Sculpture? Painting? Whimsy? Monstrous? Just try to explain or define Claire Ashley’s work. It doesn’t quite fit into a figurative box (or literal box for that matter). Her enormous pieces of inflatable art stretch the confines of gallery space as well as the bounds of definition to meld painting, sculpture, installation, and performance.

With pieces that climb 25 feet in the air and extend up to 20 feet wide, Ashley’s work challenges space as well as conceptions. It will be hard to miss the inflated, bouncy house-like structures streaked with color when they ascend in the 808 Gallery as part of Claire Ashley: (((CRZ.F.4NRS.AAK))), September 15–December 3, 2017.

“The pieces almost explode out of the space,” explains Lynne Conney, Artistic Director of the Boston University Art Galleries (BUAG). “The work plays with the scale of the space and welcomes the constraints of a window or ceiling.” The sprawling size of the 808 Gallery often makes it well-suited for group exhibitions so to host the Scottish-born Ashley’s first solo show in Boston is quite exceptional. “Solo exhibitions in 808 are usually very challenging,” says Joshua Buckno, Managing Director of the BUAG. “It can be tricky to find artists that can work with the restraints and assets of the space. We liked the idea of the inflatables. There’s a sense of humor with the large scale. We wanted to try something new in the space, so we have been experimenting with installations without walls.”

Constructed of painted, hand-sewn plasticized tarps that are then inflated, Ashley’s pieces create a multi-sensory experience. “They’re not subtle pieces and they don’t allow for definition. There’s an ambiguity in medium, an oscillation between picture playing and a 3-D sense of sculpture,” explains Conney.

The bulbous, exaggerated, taut forms seem to morph beyond the silly into a funhouse that explores the grotesque and uncomfortable. According to Ashley’s artist statement, she uses “humor, acidic color, obsession scale, and absurd pop-culture references to challenge art historical precedence and current art world power dynamics” and is “interested in how objects ‘look’ as opposed to ‘how’ they are created.”

This “look” can conjure humor and mischief while striking some serious tones as well. As Conney explains, “Ashley uses bright colors so there’s a playfulness of form that undermines the simplicity of pop art through complex, feminist perspective.” This aspect is central to Ashley’s approach and is reflected in her artist statement: “My work is particularly invested in exploring the structural possibilities of abstract painting, expanding the kinetic possibilities for monumental sculpture, and enlivening the dialogue around contemporary art across class, gender, age, and education.”

The installation in 808 Gallery invites visitors to explore the art up-close both in form and function. Ashley finds “the inflatable form compelling, as it exists in two states: both as flaccid skin and taut volume” and uses the “polarities of form within these objects as metaphors for our bodies: inhaling/exhaling, taut/wrinkled skin; flaccid/erect organs.” She is interested in how “a body can activate sculpture, and how the [sculpture] abstracts and extends that body.”

Across the street at the Faye G., Jo, and James Stone Gallery, the BUAG will feature Geoffrey Chadsey: Heroes and Secondaries. Opening in October, the solo exhibition explores visual sensibility, perception, and reality through depictions of the human body.

“Geoff has an amazing ability to layer the relationship of different images to create, what I call a very ‘particular whatever,’” explains Conney. “He inserts elements that don’t make sense, that make you question what you’re seeing.” With a background in photography and drawing, Chadsey sources images from the internet to create sketches on paper that are rendered on large sheets of Mylar. Playing with spatial reasoning, Chadsey also uses exaggerated scale in his work often producing figures that are larger than human proportions.

“The work really mixes enigmatic subjects so he’s able to reference a lot of ideas in one figure,” says Conney. “He’s able to manipulate and manifest the body with humor as well as intrigue so the work is really confronting the viewer.” Chadsey’s first solo show since 2007, Conney remarks that the exhibit promises surprise as well. “Geoff has been making a lot of new work and exploring new ideas so that integration will be on display in this exhibition.”

A companion to the Stone Gallery show is Private Screening: A Selection of Experimental Film running in The Annex beginning October 10. The first open call exhibition of video presented by the BUAG will feature ten experimental videos by New England artists. While the BUAG has featured video pieces in shows, this exhibition of video presented by the BUAG will feature ten experimental videos by New England artists. While the BUAG has featured video pieces in shows, this exhibition is the first show to exclusively run digital.

“We decided to approach The Annex space in a different way,” says Buckno. “We’re excited to connect with people that maybe we don’t know about already. The student shows at CIA are featuring more and more video and there’s a desire to engage with media so it’s interesting to explore that space.”

Claire Ashley: (((CRZ.F.4NRS.AAK)))
Reception & Performance: October 14, 3-5pm, 808 Gallery

Geoffrey Chadsey: Heroes and Secondaries
Opening Reception: October 19, 6-8pm
Faye G., Jo, and James Stone Gallery

Private Screening: A Selection of Experimental Film
The Annex

September 15–December 3, 2017
BUAG Exhibitions Play with Scale, Form, + Medium.

by Laurel Homer
Bands of the Beanpot Arrive at BU

Annual Concert unites Boston’s collegiate music-makers in pride and community.

by Emily White

In conjunction with the annual Beanpot hockey tournament, another yearly Boston tradition unites the bands of the four participating colleges and universities with the ultimate goal of making music together. “The Beanpot concert is always a special date on our calendar,” says Dr. Jennifer Bill, Director of the Concert Band. “Bringing the four schools of the Beanpot together to show the unifying power of music is a wonderful experience for the students from every school.”

At the end of October, Boston University Concert Band will have the honor of hosting ensembles from Boston College, Harvard, and Northeastern in a special concert called Bands of the Beanpot. Since the concert began nearly 15 years ago, Boston University has hosted twice, most recently in 2013. The first Bands of the Beanpot concert was held at Northeastern in February 2003, and in the spirit of uniting Boston’s schools, each band director programmed works by Boston composers. Bands of the Beanpot has continued as an annual fall event preceding the men’s and women’s hockey games in the winter.

This unique festival is both a chance showcase the host school’s ensemble and facilities as well as an opportunity to strengthen community ties among musicians across the city.

The BU Concert Band is a large concert ensemble that performs a wide range of wind band works from the traditional to contemporary throughout the year. The ensemble puts on two formal concerts each semester in addition to the Beanpot. “The BU Concert Band is a place for BU students from all colleges and majors to come together to make music,” says Dr. Bill, and it “is a unique experience for the BU students involved. It brings students together from every college and major within the University. Because they all have a passion for music, the students instantly have a connection with every single person in the concert band. It gives students a sense of stability and community during their time at BU.”

Mike Barsano, Director of University Ensembles, echoes the fun and familial characteristic of BU Bands. “There is a great community aspect of the program. It’s based around music but it’s also based around building a community of musicians that all have studies elsewhere.” The fifty or so students in the BU Concert Band, and the more than 300 students who participate in one of the BU Bands, represent all colleges across the university. From engineers to artists, BU Bands unite a wide spectrum of students with a shared passion for music making.

The Bands of the Beanpot creates that sentiment of community on an even greater level for musicians around Boston, in reaching out to similar programs at other schools and bringing them together to put on a massive show for a packed audience. Hosting the concert this fall affords BU students a chance to show the entire community their musical skills as well as showcasing the music-making that takes place in other schools.

“The rivalry between the four schools is put aside once a year to experience the connection of music,” says Dr. Bill. Of course, once the Beanpot actually takes place in February, the bands will be prepared to loudly ignite the crowd’s scarlet pride and all the “Go BU!” cheers they can muster.

Find more information about BU Bands at bu.edu/bands.
October

10/05
Boston University Wind Ensemble
October 5, 8 pm Performing the Overture to Candide by Bernstein;
Serenade No. 12 in C minor, K. 388 by Mozart; Watchmen, Tell Us of the Night by Campbells, and Dance Movements by Sparke.
David Martin, conductor. Tsai Performance Center

10/6 — 10/29
21st Annual Fringe Festival
Presented by CFA School of Music: Opera Institute and School of Theatre • Now in its 21st season, Fringe is a collaborative festival with a mission to produce new or rarely performed significant works in the opera and theatre repertoire, bringing performers and audiences together in unique theatrical settings. Please refer to the Ticket Information section for ticket purchasing information.

Sweets by Kate October 6 — 0
Friday, Oct. 6, 7:30pm (BU Visitor’s Day)
Saturday, Oct. 7, 2pm & 7:30pm • Sunday, Oct. 8, 2pm
Music Direction by Allison Voh • Stage Direction by Emily Ranii • Composed by Griffin Candyey on a libretto and original story by Thom K. Miller • Chosen as part of Fort Worth Opera’s 2017 Frontiers program • Commissioned and premiered by the Midwest Institute of Opera, premiered July 2015 & a dark comedy in two short acts. When Elizabeth Bringham’s father dies suddenly, she decides to return to the small town that shunned her twelve years earlier. Amid the outwardly-cheery glow of 1950s rural America, Elizabeth and her partner, Kate, must square off with the lurking disaproval of the town, the testing success of the family business, and her family’s (quite literal) deals with the Devil.

BU New Play Initiative: Downtown • Oct 14 — 15
Friday, Oct. 13, 7:30pm (Talk-Back) • Saturday, Oct. 14, 2pm & 7:30pm • Sunday, Oct. 15, 2pm
By Kyle Chua (CFA’18) • Directed by Michael Hammond! Al’s debut novel, about his unrequited affections for a man named Ben, was shaped to provoke and sell. But when Ben turns up at one of Al’s literary events bearing threats of a lawsuit, both men are forced to examine the reasons that brought them together, and the circumstances that pulled them apart. Alternating between past and present, Downtown is a puzzle of fact and fiction, an exploration of the intersections of race, nationality, and queerness. A BU New Play Initiative production.

The War Reporter • October 22 — 22
Friday, Oct. 20, 7:30pm • Saturday, Oct. 21, 2pm & 7:30pm • Sunday, Oct. 22, 2pm
Music Direction by William Lumpkin • Stage Direction by Jim Petosa • Composed by Jonathan Berger on a libretto by Dan O’Brien • Premiered as part of the 2013 “Prototype Festival” (Beth Morrison Productions) The true story of Pulitzer Prize-winning combat journalist Paul Watson as he seeks to stifle the haunting voice of an American soldier whose corpse he photographed in the streets of Mogadishu.

Mother Courage and Her Children October 27 — 29
Friday, Oct. 27, 7:30pm (CFA Visitor’s Day and Talk-Back) • Saturday, Oct. 28, 2pm & 7:30pm • Sunday, Oct. 29, 2pm
By Bertolt Brecht • Translated by David Hare • Directed by Jeremy Ohringer • Widely regarded as Brecht’s best work, Mother Courage and Her Children is a theatrical landmark and one of the most powerful anti-war plays in history.

Free with BU ID, subject to availability. Please refer to the Ticket Information section to the right of this calendar for ticket purchasing information.

10/10 — 12/10
Private Screening: A Selection of Experimental Film
Opening Reception: October 19th, 6-8 pm The first open call exhibition of work to be presented by the BURG. The featured video works by New England artists. Presented in the intimate setting of the BURG Annex. Private Screening will feature a selection of video and new media works by artists mining a range of themes, styles and techniques. The Annex

10/12
Visiting Artist: Michael Rosler
October 12, 6:30pm Martha Rosler, a pioneer of American conceptual performance, installation, and video art in the 1970s, whose widely influential work on most urgent social, aesthetic, and political issues of the day. A conversation with Curator of Art and Architecture at Bost Festival, Jacob Sleep Audition.

10/13
Fall Arts Concert
October 13, 8pm All Campus Oct come together for this annual celebration.

10/14
James Demler and Rodney Lister Faculty Talk-Back
October 14, 8pm Featuring the music of several composers who were active in the musical and political life of New York in the 1930s and beyond, James Demler (CFA) joined by guests Julia Cavalaro (tenor). CFA Concert Hall

10/17
BU Singers
October 17, 8 pm Performing A Festival of American Composers Featuring works by Byrd, Willams, Pinn, and Kiki Felipe and Jacob Wittkopp, conductor.

10/18
Boston University Opera
October 18, 8pm Performing Final Scene on a Theme by Haydn, op. 56b in D minor, op. 120 by Schumann.

10/20 — 12/10
Geoffrey Chasseyn, Heroes and Seekers
Opening Reception: October 19th of visual sensuality, perception, and the human body. Stone Gallery

10/21
Cairn Residency
October 21, 8pm The Cairn Ensemble will come to the CU Center for the Arts. They will play in the concourse around their musical instrument information at ensemble-cairn.com.

Repetoire for the concert will be contemporary,imus to the music of Mendelssohn, Buttoff, and Vivaldi. The Cairn Ensemble are based in the Valley.

10/21 — 10/22
Classic Repertory
Othello Saturday, October 13, 7:30pm Othello Saturday, October 22, 7:30pm Othello Saturday, October To Kill a Mockingbird Sunday, October 22, 7:30pm Please refer to the Ticket Information section to the right of this calendar for ticket purchasing information.

Presented by BU CFA and New Repertory Theatre • Directed by Michael Hammond

10/27
Boston University Chamber Orchestra
September 25, 8pm Perform ing Symphony No. 3 by Philip Glass, and Beethoven’s Egmont Overture, op. 84 and Symphony No. 7 in A major, op. 92. Neal Hampton, conductor. CFA Concert Hall

2017 Fall Student Showcase
Featuring works by undergraduate students in painting, sculpture, graphic design, and printmaking. Stone Gallery

10/15 — 10/16
BU Center for the Arts
October 16, 8pm Performing A Festival of American Composers Featuring works by Byrd, Williams, Pinn, and Kiki Felipe and Jacob Wittkopp, conductor.

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November 10/22 — 10/23
Arditti Residency
ICA Boston Collaboration

The world-renowned Arditti Quartet will return to the BU Center for New Music on Oct. 22 for a concert, and on Oct. 23, the Quartet will be at BU for pedagogical events and readings of student works.

Sunday, October 22, 2017, 3pm The Arditti Quartet will perform a concert of prominent 21st female composers: co-produced and hosted by ICA/Boston and featuring a piece by this spring's BU CNM guest composer Liza Lim. Founded in 1974 by Irivne Arditti, the quartet's concerts and albums of 20th and 21st century music have been praised for their technical expertise and spirited interpretations.

Program: Liza Lim Hall, Clara Iannotta Dead waps in the jam jar, Rebecca Saunders Fetch interval, Hilda Parades Bitacora Capilar, Olga Neuwirth In the realms of the unreal. Institute of Contemporary Art • Tickets: $20, $10 ICA members • students.

10/29
Bands of the Beanpot

Boston University Symphony Orchestra, Felipe and Jacob Wittkopp, conductors. 10/28 — 10/29

10/13
Fall Arts Concert *

Thursday, Nov 9, 7:30pm • Friday, Nov 10, 8pm (Talk-Back) Saturday, November 11, 2pm and 8pm • Sunday, November 12, 2pm

Please refer to the Ticket Information section to the right of this calendar for ticket purchasing information.

By Thornton Wilder • Directed by Stephen Pick
The story follows of this calendar for ticket purchasing information.

By Thornton Wilder • Directed by Stephen Pick. The story follows a small town in three acts: “Dutty Littl,” “Love and Marriage,” and “Death and Eternity.” • $15 General Admission • $10 BU Alumni • $7.50 with CFA Membership • Free with BU ID, at the door, day of performance, subject to availability • bu.edu/cfa/season • 617.353.3380 • Studio ONE

11/16
Boston University Wind Ensemble

November 16, 8 pm Performing New England Triptych by Schuman, Prospect Hill – Flourish for Brass by Sienfeld, From a Dark Millennium by Schwaner, and A Child's Garden of Dreams by Maslanka. Tsai Performance Center

November 12, 8pm Performing Lili Boulanger’s D’un matin de printemps, Stravinsky’s Pulcinella Suite, and Le Sacre du printemps (The Rite of Spring), Bramwell Tovey, Conductor

Symphony Hall

11/18
Lynn Eustis and Javier Arevelo Faculty Recital

November 18, 4 pm “On Aging and the Passing of Time” Lynn Eustis (soprano) and Javier Arevelo (piano) perform songs about aging selected from classical, popular, and musical theater repertoire. CFA Concert Hall

11/20
Boston University Symphonic Chorus

November 20, 8 pm Performing Cantiú in Memory of Benjamin Britten by Pärt, Dona nobis pacem by Vásquez, and Passion and Resurrection by El Envidal. Miguel Ángel Felgui, conductor. All Saints Parish, 1773 Beacon Street, Brookline

10/12
Fall Arts Concert *

Thursday, October 12, 6:30pm

Martha Rosler: A Pioneer of American Conceptual Photography, Video Art, and Feminist Art Practice

Advance Democracy by Britten, going to the Rich by Jenefer, Kaulana Ha'eo by Wong Kalu. Miguel Ángel Felgui, conductors. CFA Concert Hall

Symphony Orchestra

Poulenc's Organ Concerto (soprano) and Javier Arrebola (piano) perform songs about aging selected from classical, popular, and musical theater repertoire. CFA Concert Hall

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* Friends & Family Weekend event

Ticket Information

All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Visit bu.edu/cfa/events for more details.

New Rep/BCAP $25–59 with discounts available to CFA Members and BU Community • newrep.org • 617.923.8487
Fringe $7 general admission; $3.50 CFA Membership; free with BU ID at the door, day of performance, subject to availability. bu.edu/cfa/season • 617.353.3380
New Rep/CRC $20 general public • $15 BU Alumni. Groups of 10+ • $10 CFA Membership, New Repertory Theatre Subscribers, and Student Matinee Students • Free with BU ID, at the door, day of performance, subject to availability • Tsai Performance Center is this host venue for CRC. • bu.edu/cfa/season • 617.353.3380

Venues

Boston University Art Galleries
808 Gallery 808 Commonwealth Avenue
Commonwealth Gallery 855 Commonwealth Avenue
Faye G., Jo, and James Stone Gallery 855 Commonwealth Avenue
The Annex 855 Commonwealth Avenue

Boston University Performance + Lecture Venues

CFA Concert Hall 855 Commonwealth Avenue
Institute of Contemporary Arts, Boston 25 Harbor Drive
Jacob Sleeper Auditorium 871 Commonwealth Avenue
Mosesian Center for the Arts 321 Arsenal Street, Watertown
Studio ONE 855 Commonwealth Avenue
Symphony Hall 808 Commonwealth Avenue
Commonwealth Gallery 808 Commonwealth Avenue
808 Gallery 808 Commonwealth Avenue
Commonwealth Gallery 855 Commonwealth Avenue
Faye G., Jo, and James Stone Gallery 855 Commonwealth Avenue
The Annex 855 Commonwealth Avenue

Boston University College of Fine Arts
Reimagining Fringe

A reconstructed space invites the community to embrace the unknown with the annual opera & theatre festival.

by Emily White

In a year of growth and evolution at the College of Fine Arts, the artistic directors of the annual Fringe Festival are seizing the opportunity to explore the edges of this experimental and collaborative program. With the renovation of the former TheatreLab@855, renamed Studio ONE, Jim Petosa, William Lumpkin, and Oshin Gregorian are using the space’s reimagining to the festival’s advantage, re-conceptualizing the program in its twenty-first year.

All performances are to be held in an intentionally fluctuating space, as the seating and stage space in the reconstructed Studio ONE will be reconfigured as imagined by each show’s creative minds. Redesigned in summer 2017, Studio ONE will be arranged for two operas and two plays during the festival’s October weekends.

Studio ONE is centralized on the BU Campus, a change from the Fringe’s previous venues, and as Artistic Director of Opera Institute and Opera Programs William Lumpkin reflects, it’s “an exciting time to claim a new space and claim a home in the context of this new theatre” across the street, while still maintaining the connection to the city with other productions throughout the year.

According to Lumpkin, the gutted form of the Studio ONE space presents an intentionally fluctuating space, as one of history’s most powerful anti-war plays. “What could be perceived as challenges with the space we see as interesting architectural elements that help tell the story and define the space for the performers and audience.”

The challenge that the directors embrace is maintaining successful and affecting sensibilities of the festival in a completely new context, taking advantage of unknown elements, and presenting a new layer of the festival.

Fringe began two decades ago in CFA classrooms at 855 Commonwealth, and has come full circle in this year of evolution. As a program, Fringe has been progressive in its themes and approach, and aims to highlight a repertoire that is contemporary, cutting edge, and relevant. In that sense, performing in a nontraditional space is seamless with Fringe Festival’s identity, melding the current and the classic in a fresh way for audience and artist alike to learn something new in dialogue.

Jim Petosa, Director of the School of Theatre, is ready to reach for the unknown. “We’re figuring out things in a new way. There’s a tendency to rely on how we used to do it, to mold our present into the past. We’re not doing that. Instead we’re saying, ‘Let’s start over. Let’s embrace this.’ And what we find is the unknown is exciting. We’re enjoying this moment: we don’t exactly know how we’ll get there from here, but we welcome the journey, and that’s invigorating.”

This Fall in Fringe

Performed over the course of four weekends, the two plays and two operas chosen for the 2017 Fringe Festival reveal thematic connections that are both significant and timely. Much like the way the directors, actors, and musicians are engaged with the new performance space, this year’s repertoire selections are in dialogue with each other. Ultimately, that is a core mission of Fringe—to unite performers and audiences in unique theatrical settings and to begin conversations. When it comes to determining the repertoire, Managing Director of Opera Institute and Opera Programs Oshin Gregorian explains that the process is organic. “Every year we ask ‘who do we have?’ and ‘how can we best serve our population and community?’” This year in particular, the performance selections speak to themes that are undeniably linked and relevant to the wider cultural context. “In the Opera program at BU, we’re open to all types of stories. So many people think opera is relegated to old stories, but we pride ourselves on going for the full range of experience with the pieces we pick. We’ve tended to gravitate towards the more edgy and progressive material.”

Sweats by Kate, a dark comedic opera in two acts composed by Griffin Candey on a libretto and original story by Thom K. Miller, brings together themes of family, history, and acceptance when Elizabeth returns with her partner Kate to the small town that shunned her. Echoing themes of memory and identity, the next performance and first play of Fringe, Downtown tells a story exploring the intersections of race, nationality, and queerness. In it, Al’s debut novel about a man named Ben forces both to examine what brought them together and the circumstances that pulled them apart. Downtown is a BU New Play Initiative production conceived by current student Kyle Chua (CFA’19).

In the second half of Fringe Festival 2017, coming to Studio ONE is The War Reporter by Jonathan Berger on a libretto by Dan O’Brien, the true story of Pulitzer Prize-winning combat journalist Paul Watson as he seeks to stifle the haunting voice of an American soldier whose corpse he photographed in the streets of Mogadishu. In a parallel commentary on the damaging effects of war, Bertolt Brecht’s Mother Courage and Her Children, the final selection of Fringe as translated by David Hare, is widely regarded as one of history’s most powerful anti-war plays.

In addition to the accessibility of Studio ONE’s location, Fringe’s artistic directors hope the content of the plays and operas, as well as the artists behind them, can be equally accessible to students. Operas Sweats by Kate and The War Reporter are the works of contemporary literary composers and librettists telling stories that are directly relevant to today’s conversations. “I believe young people care about these stories,” remarks Lumpkin. “It’s important to see these stories told in a formal setting, in opera, and in a language the audience understands.”

Watching an opera, according to Gregorian, is much more than simply absorbing entertainment. “Seeing the humanity right in front of you is so different than being inundated by news or absentilly scrolling through social media. It opens up engagement in an entirely new approach. And then it raises the stakes to participate in a new way.”

The space in which Fringe Festival is arranged and the experimental experiences it provides insists in students a sense of freedom and confidence. Fringe is built on a level of intimacy which opens the door that freedom of exploration that translates to the larger stage experience. Bill Lumpkin is hopeful that the new space will carry on that intimacy. Through Fringe, he says, “we are uniting these areas of study in the direction of one common goal.”

Fringe Festival performances will be held at Studio ONE at the College of Fine Arts, 855 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston. See the calendar for more performance and ticketing information.
Minimalism Made Monumental
Reflection on an immersive CFA trip to Marfa.
by Logen Zimmerman

Hollywood is a metonym for the film industry, and the art installation/town of Marfa, Texas could well be for minimalist art. While the reputation of the former exceeds that of the latter, both contain elements of fiction that extend beyond the places themselves.

Take for example the Prada Marfa, an installation by Elmgreen & Dragset in a faux-storefront facing the two-lane backstop of Highway 90 and framed by West Texas desert expanses. Its display is set in 2005 and nothing behind the windows is actually for sale. It is also not located in Marfa, but rather more than thirty miles away. Or consider the Marfa Lights, which have their own viewing station on the other side of town. No one has ever definitively seen them, or at least offered a decisive explanation for what they are. Located within the approximately mile and half square of Marfa is a rich history of minimalist art, supposedly fixed in time, yet like the phoenix, constantly renewing itself—through visitors seeking a personal minimalist experience.

From March 8-11, this included a group from BU School of Visual Arts.

During Spring Recens, graduate students from the MFA Painting and Sculpture programs experienced Marfa and its environs on an extracurricular trip organized by Assistant Professor Won Ju Lim and Lecturer Marc Schepens. I joined them. We prepared for the trip by reading and discussing articles on minimalism, including foundational texts by Donald Judd and Michael Fried. We learned that opinions have differed on what exactly constitutes minimalism, and that the term was often eschewed by high profile sculptors whose work had been classified as such. Professor Lim also asked us to consider the trip from Boston to Marfa as part of a journey. For many of us this began with a flight to Dallas followed by a visit to Louis Kahn’s architectural masterpiece, the Kimbell Art Museum, in Fort Worth. The next day we ventured some eight hours by car across the plains and through the two-lane blacktop of Highway 90 and framed by West Texas desert expanses. Its display is set in 2005 and nothing behind the windows is actually for sale. It is also not located in Marfa, but rather more than thirty miles away. Or consider the Marfa Lights, which have their own viewing station on the other side of town. No one has ever definitively seen them, or at least offered a decisive explanation for what they are. Located within the approximately mile and half square of Marfa is a rich history of minimalist art, supposedly fixed in time, yet like the phoenix, constantly renewing itself—through visitors seeking a personal minimalist experience.

Footnotes:

All article images courtesy of Logen Zimmerman. Top left: Sign of Marfa. Middle top: Prada Marfa. Middle middle: Chinati landscape. Middle bottom: Irwin Building. Bottom right: CFA students in Marfa.
Catalyst for Common Ground

BU Orientation shares the stage with Theatre to tackle tough topics.

by Laurel Homer

The response to *Baltimor* and the subsequent talk-back was beyond expectation for both student and parent alike. “The conversation was really rich, much richer than had we just had a lecture or panel,” says Elmore. He considered bringing the play back for summer 2017’s sessions until he attended the New Repertory Theatre/BCAP production of *Good* last fall. The 1981 drama by C.P. Taylor is a study of a sufficiently respectable man in 1930s Germany and the compromises and allowances he is willing to make in the name of Nazi allegiance.

“The play opens the door to a whole new avenue of conversation,” explains Petosa, who serves as Artistic Director for New Rep and directed the fall production. “It’s the story of how a society is willing to change its moral stripes even when it means becoming morally bankrupt.” Mounted in advance of the November presidential election, the New Rep/BCAP production was a direct response to the political landscape in the United States, a cautionary tale of where concessions can ultimately lead, and a chilling inquiry of the capacity and culpability within every individual.

The subject matter is heavy, but contemporary, and sets the stage for conversation around issues that are top of mind, but perhaps hard to articulate and address. “After Charlottesville the relevance of this play really came into focus,” says Elmore.

“It’s jarring and scary, but I want students and parents to know that it’s okay to be jarred, it’s okay to be scared. We can’t ignore this. We have to engage with it. It’s a starting point because there will be more moments when we’re jarred or scared and we can go back to this common experience, this dialogue, and take something from it.”

Tim Spears (CFA’06,’11,’16) appeared in the New Rep production and serves as director of the summer orientation performances featuring Connor Paradis (CFA’19), Leo Blais (CFA’17), Stephanie Castillo (CFA’19), and Devon Stokes (CFA’19). Spears opted for simplicity in the staging to bring greater focus to the dialogue of the play. “The questions that these plays ask of their characters are complex and do not really contain binary answers,” says Spears. “By watching stories, not necessarily our own, we are given insight into who we might be as individuals and as a community and to answer questions of our own selves in ways that we may not have realized before.”

For Elmore, art is the perfect conduit to examine these struggles, to reflect as individuals, and to come together in conversation as a community. “This is what society needs: to be able to go into a room, share a performance, and then have the permission to critique the subject,” he says.

Elmore is already looking forward to taking in School of Theatre’s upcoming season of performances in consideration of next summer’s orientation program. He is also eager to expand inspiration to include a piece of music or visual art, and hopes this model encourages other academic institutions to tackle tough subjects and foster conversation through the arts.

“This partnership has been a really wonderful way of bringing academics and student services together in a big collaboration,” says Elmore. “To spark conversation about the human condition, to provide a construct for social incubation and innovation, and to do this all through art is just amazing.”

A full-scale production of *Good* returns to Boston University in the fall with three performances planned on campus so all students have the opportunity to explore the themes and “get on the common page.” Petosa looks forward to providing a fertile ground for activating more conversation around issues through performances on the Charles River Campus including the new Studio ONE space in 855 Commonwealth as well as the Booth Theatre set to open in early 2018.

“Theatre creates an opening for students to experience other worlds,” explains Petosa. “The Joan and Edgar Booth and other venues on campus provide immediate access to these explorations and we are poised to push the conversation in our neighborhood and in our community.”

For Elmore, it is more than simply exposing students to art; it is about allowing art to create a common experience, activate thought, and fuel discussion. “There’s no doubt that art is a gift,” says Elmore. “But, art is also a catalyst. It has a real relevance in our times to push us back to history to see how we have progressed and to see how we haven’t.”
On the evening of March 10, 2017, Rebecca Ness (CFA '15) took an anxiety nap. “When I’m anxious, I go to sleep for a little while and I wake up feeling better.” When she awoke, Rebecca checked her phone. There it was. The message she’d been waiting for from Yale University: A decision was posted to your admissions account. “When I saw that message, I got up and walked around my room thinking, ‘this is it.’” She clicked and read: We are pleased...

After hugging her roommates and calling her mother, the news began to sink in that she’d been accepted to the MFA-Painting program at Yale. It was a new beginning and to get this moment, Ness, 24, had worked hard at painting and drawing for most of her life, including four years in the BFA-Painting program at CFA. “BU was my dream school for undergraduate and Yale for graduate.” For young artists, these goals are not unusual. Achieving them is a different story.

As a child, Ness attended the Acorn Gallery School of Art in Marblehead, Massachusetts. “It was great, I started figure painting with oil at 10 years old. Jack Highberger ran it, and he had studied painting at CFA.” Like BU, Acorn pushed a foundational approach to drawing and painting. Ness explains it this way: “You can’t do calculus unless you’ve done algebra. You can’t make a really good painting unless you know why the object looks that way.”

When it came time for college, BU seemed like a natural progression. “We visited CFA every year. I felt comfortable there. If you were an Acorn kid, it made sense to go to BU.”

In her senior year, Ness was hired by the BU student newspaper, the Daily Free Press, as a sketch artist at one of the biggest trials in Boston history, the marathon bombing. “The court did not allow photographers, so the Daily Free Press wanted a drawing student from CFA to attend the trial. I submitted a few drawings and they hired me and gave me press credentials.” The trial hit close to home as one of her friends was injured. “I actually saw my friend on the security footage they showed at the trial. She had gone to the Apple store that day and was a few feet away from one of the explosions. It was hard to see her on the video.” (Her friend has since recovered.)

Tension in the courtroom was already high, but when the accused bomber entered to take his seat, everything stopped. “Everyone was talking and then when he entered, the room went silent. My adrenaline shot up when I saw him. He had injuries on his face and walked slowly. When he sat down, he mostly looked forward.” Though the trial was at times, painful, Ness is grateful for the experience. “It was interesting being a witness to history.”

In 2015, BU Professor Dana Clancy chose Rebecca to show alongside her at the New York Studio School for an exhibition of teachers with students called Common Threads. “I appreciate how Rebecca’s eye is on the political and social world, on the humorously-harrowing human, and the vulnerable self.” Though Ness graduated a couple of years ago, Clancy continues to watch her work. “I love following Rebecca’s work since graduation, both the paintings and the way that painting seems for her to be so embedded in relationship.” Ness credits her former professor with changing how she feels about painting. “One day, Dana (Professor Clancy) said to me, ‘You’re not having enough fun!’ She was right. I realized I could be myself and have fun with painting.”

Another mentor, BU Professor Richard Ryan, also pushed Ness to allow her work to express all of her sides. Ryan notes wryly: “Rebecca is a very kind and warm human being but she also has a wicked wit. As a painter, this is a serious conflict. Her work really sings when she goes for the jugular and doesn’t use the nice filter.” Since last fall, Rebecca has worked full-time in the CFA dean’s office working on ways to improve the student experience. “I always wanted to be a teacher and BU helped me to realize I wanted to remain in higher education.” When asked if she planned to stay connected to CFA after she leaves for Yale, Ness is emphatic. “CFA is my family. Why would I not be active as an alum?”
Overdrive

CFA Distinguished Alumni Awards

Join the College of Fine Arts community in celebration of alumni who have distinguished themselves professionally through outstanding achievements and contributions to the arts. College of Fine Arts Distinguished Alumni Awards will honor Missy Mazzoli (BUTI’98, SOM’02), Composer; Brian McLean (SVA’99), Director of Rapid Prototype, LAIKA; and Kim Raver (SOT’91), Actor. Joel Christian Gill (SVA’04) will be the emcee for the event.

September 15 • 808 Gallery • 5pm Reception, 6pm Awards Ceremony • Learn more at bu.edu/alumniseven. • Can’t make it? Follow myCFA on Snapchat and @buarts on Instagram for live updates!

BUTI Young Artists Perform at the Hatch Shell

Members of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute (BUTI) Young Artists Wind Ensemble performed the prelude music for Opening Night of the Boston Landmarks Orchestra at the Hatch Memorial Shell on July 19, 2017. Christopher Wilkins (BUTI ’72, ’73, ’74) was the music director and conductor.

BUTI is a premier summer training program that offers aspiring young musicians the opportunity to work under the guidance of distinguished professionals and in the presence of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

For more information, visit bu.edu/cfa/tanglewood.

The Joan & Edgar Booth Theatre

Boston University trustee Steve Zide (LAW’86) has named the Joan and Edgar Booth Theatre with a generous gift of $10 million. Zide believes the gift is a fitting tribute to his theatre-loving wife, Janet Zide, and his in-laws, for whom the theatre is named and who brought the joy of stage performance into his life and the lives of the Zides’ four children. The 250-seat Joan and Edgar Booth Theatre will be a centerpiece of the 75,000-square-foot theater complex designed by the Boston architectural firm Elkus Manfredi. The theatre is located next to the 808 Gallery, across the street from the College of Fine Arts at 855 Commonwealth Ave.

FlashPoint Festival partners with the School of Visual Arts

FlashPoint Festival, Boston’s Premier Photographic Event, is partnering with the School of Visual Arts in collaboration with the Contemporary Perspectives Artist lecture series. With the mission of bringing institutions together around community, art and photography, FlashPoint Festival connects the photographic community of greater Boston and beyond.

The fall 2017 visiting Contemporary Perspectives Artist is influential artist/writer/activist Martha Rosler, a pioneer of conceptual photography, video art, and feminist art practice. Lecture: Thursday, October 12, 6:30pm, Sleeper Auditorium.

FlashPoint will also host the Boston Portfolio Walk and Portfolio Reviews on October 21st at the College of Fine Arts. This event will provide an opportunity for emerging and established photographers to meet with curators, teachers, gallerists, collectors, and other industry professionals. Saturday, October 21, 2017 • Learn more at flashpointboston.org and bu.edu/cfa/arts-lab.

Experience the innovative talent of the next generation of theatre, music, and visual artists when you purchase a Membership!

$25 per household entitles membership holders to unlimited half-price tickets to all CFA events held at the College of Fine Arts, Boston University, Joan & Edgar Booth Theatre, and Symphony Hall. Events include those produced by CFA School of Theatre, School of Music, Opera Institute, and Boston Center for American Performance. CFA Members are also eligible for half-price tickets to productions at New Repertory Theatre and Boston Playwrights’ Theatre.

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