College combines with National Endowment for the Arts to present multifaceted quilt extravaganza

Three departments from the College of Fine Arts and Communication worked together this fall to provide the Southeast Texas community a fascinating, interdisciplinary glimpse into the world of quilting.

The National Endowment for the Arts partially funded the Art of the Quilt, which included an exhibition of Quilt National’s acclaimed touring show at the Dishman Art Museum and a production of the musical Quilters, a collaborative effort of the Department of Theatre & Dance and the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music.

A textile conservator, along with regional and national quilt artists, including the famed Blockheads bee of the Golden Triangle Quilt Guild, also presented a variety of workshops in conjunction with the Quilt National exhibition.

Founded in 1979, the biennial Quilt National exhibition has showcased the best and most exciting contemporary art quilts being created around the world. The Dishman Art Museum is the only Texas venue to feature Quilt National ‘11.

Directed by Ron Zank, visiting instructor of theatre, Quilters has been described as a joyous and moving musical celebration of American womanhood and the pioneer spirit. Written by Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek, and based on the book The Quilters: Women and Domestic Art by Patricia Cooper and Norma Bradley Allen, the musical opened on Broadway in 1984 and was nominated for six Tony Awards, including Best Musical. Lamar’s production was staged in October in the University Theatre.

“This was a terrific collaborative venture for the college,” said Russ Schultz, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication. “We are grateful to the National Endowment for the Arts for being a catalyst for this event.”
Court

Dishman and Albert Nolen spearheaded members for chairing these events: Melanie wonderful Friends of the Arts and community Dishman Art Museum. We are grateful to our food and wine to support the endowment of the sold-out ⚜eatre & Dance. January will bring the already and his wife Susan in November, while raising revelry, feted Lamar President Jimmy Simmons’ presidency at Lamar. While we are sad to see the end of his term at Lamar, there is also great anticipation to build on the magnificent campus as we move forward to a new era with work he has started. This is an exciting time on campus as we move forward to a new era with the search for a new president. We are grateful for the support of our alumni and the college’s advisory council and Friends of the Arts. Throughout the year, I am constantly reminded of how wonderful it is to work in the College of Fine Arts and Communication, surrounded by such talented students and faculty. And, as always, I greatly value your continued support and interest in our programs.

For more details on all our news and events, visit us on the Web at lamar.edu/cofac or call (409) 880-8137. You may also follow us at Facebook.com/LamarCOFAC and Twitter.com/LamarCOFAC.

Our major annual fundraiser for the college, Le Grand Bal, is very much on track under the guidance of chairs Allison and Michael Gertz. This year’s black-tie gala honors Sallye Keith for her many wonderful contributions to the arts, and promises—as always—to be a great party for a great cause. I can’t reveal any more details about the theme of this year’s Ball other than to say that guests will be delighted with the creativity and vision of the Getzes.

Accreditation is a highly important component of our academic mission, and this year we have completed the reaccreditation visit from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, or ASHA, which is the accrediting body for the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences. Preparations are also underway for our 10-year review with the National Association of Schools of Music and the initial review of the Department of Art by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, both of which will evaluate our programs in the 2013-14 academic year.

This year marks the final year in Dr. Jimmy Simmons’ presidency at Lamar. While we are sad to see the end of his term at Lamar, there is also great anticipation to build on the magnificent work he has started. This is an exciting time on campus as we move forward to a new era with the search for a new president. We are grateful for the support of our alumni and the college’s advisory council and Friends of the Arts. Throughout the year, I am constantly reminded of how wonderful it is to work in the College of Fine Arts and Communication, surrounded by such talented students and faculty. And, as always, I greatly value your continued support and interest in our programs.

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Rass A. Schultz
Dean, College of Fine Arts and Communication Lamar University

Mary Jane Garth pictured with Lamar University President Jimmy Simmons

A passion for music and the visual arts will result in a permanent legacy for Southeast Texas arts patron Mary Jane Garth—a gift that will enrich the lives and cultivate the talents of students at Lamar University.

The Mary Jane Garth Regents’ Scholarship has been established in the Lamar University Foundation to benefit undergraduates majoring in music or art at Lamar University, President Jimmy Simmons announced.

“I am thrilled to think that I can be part of changing the lives of Lamar students for many years to come,” Garth said. “I have often pondered how I could best support the arts and music at Lamar, and I feel that this scholarship is something that will provide support for deserving students who may become our future leaders.”

“This scholarship will enable the university to select and support the most deserving students who otherwise might not be able to continue their education,” said Garth, who said she selected art and music for the scholarships because “these are my passions.”

Mary Jane Garth Regents’ Scholarship provides lasting legacy

Cardinal Court fundraiser brings Renaissance frivolity to Lamar

Dancing, singing, feasting, swordplay and puppetry were among the many Renaissance-era delights that entertained guests at the Cardinal Court fundraiser for the Department of Theatre & Dance in late November. The court honored outgoing Lamar President Jimmy Simmons, and his wife, Susan, as the King and Queen of Revelries. Albert Nolen and Melanie Dishman were co-chairs for the fundraiser, with Barbara Quinn acting as Court Jester.

Guests were treated to a holiday feast fit for a king. Steaming cups of wassail, a traditional drink of mulled cider, added to the seasonal festivities.

“This was a new event for the department that featured the talents of our theater and dance majors,” said Kelly Graper, director of the department. “It was a fun evening of food, song and dance, and quite a successful fundraiser. We look forward to continuing this new tradition for years to come.”

Throughout the departments of the College of Fine Arts and Communications, we see vibrant changes and additions to our academic and artistic offerings. We are grateful for the support of our alumni and the college’s advisory council and Friends of the Arts. Throughout the year, I am constantly surrounded by such talented students and faculty.

Such was the case with our production of the musical Quilters, which blended music and choreography with the creative storytelling of the Quilt as it traveled throughout the departments of the College of Fine Arts and Communications. The unique nature of our college allows us to share what we are doing on campus with the public, so part of our quilting venture involved collaborating together on projects in order to collaborate together on projects in order to...

We are grateful for the support of our alumni and the college’s advisory council and Friends of the Arts. Throughout the year, I am constantly surrounded by such talented students and faculty.
LU welcomes Megan Young, director of Dishman Art Museum

“I look at art as catharsis for the viewer and the maker. Art resolidifies a community after a trauma, and can shape our understanding of that trauma.”

T he new director of Lamar University’s Dishman Art Museum looks to achieve a higher level of greatness for the venue.

“I am excited about the potential for the Dishman to be more utilized as a teaching and learning resource to the Lamar and Southeast Texas community across different disciplines,” said Megan Young, assistant professor of art history, who assumed duties this fall.

A native of Gulf Shores, Ala., Young is a doctoral candidate at the University of Kansas, and has a Master of Arts in art history and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in photography from the University of Alabama.

“I consider myself an equal-opportunity art historian,” said Young. Her dissertation, “After the Deluge: Contemporary Artists Engage Katrina,” examines instances of contemporary art that investigate the ramifications of this catastrophic event in various ways. “Young is particularly interested in the way visual interpretations of trauma can create or recreate collective or cultural identity in the wake of catastrophe.”

“I look at art as catharsis for the viewer and the maker. Art resolidifies a community after a trauma, and can shape our understanding of that trauma,” said Young.

“We’re very pleased to have Megan as our new director on board and providing leadership for the Dishman for the future,” said Russ Schultz, dean. “She brings a wealth of knowledge and initiative to the position, which is greatly needed for the academic and community needs we serve.”

Young moved to Beaumont with her husband Michael, young daughter Audrey Jane, and three dogs and two cats.

New Faculty Members
In addition to Megan Young, COFAC is proud to welcome:

Art
Sherry Saunders | Assistant Professor
MFA, Savannah College of Art and Design

Communication
Jennifer Scarduzio | Assistant Professor
Ph.D., Arizona State University

Deaf Studies & Deaf Education
Milticent Muzzyk | Assistant Professor
Ph.D., Gallaudet University

Drama
Paris | Assistant Professor
Ed.D., Lamar University

Music
Johanna Yunker | Visiting Instructor
Ph.D., Stanford University

Speech & Hearing Sciences
Nandhakumar Radhakrishnan | Assistant Professor
Ph.D., Bowling Green State University
Heather Reading | Assistant Professor
Au.D., Lamar University

G rowing awareness of the dangers of concussion has led teams at all levels, from the National Football League down to Pee Wee football, to employ policies to reduce and treat occurrences of brain injury. The NCAA now requires all Division I member institutions to have a concussion management plan in place for its student athletes.

“Essentially, in a concussion, you have an impact on the brain,” explained Josh Yonker, head Lamar athletic trainer. “The brain is not tight against the skull, and so in an impact, it will hit against the inside of the skull and kind of bounce back and forth. That can lead to memory loss, light sensitivity, nausea and the other symptoms of a concussion. We have to make sure that an athlete’s brain has returned to normal before we put them back out there because an elevation in heart rate or blood pressure can negatively affect their brain and their recovery.”

A number of signs and symptoms must be taken into consideration when diagnosing and treating individuals with concussion.

“The subjective nature of post-concussive symptoms makes the decision of allowing athletes to return to play extremely difficult,” said Vickie Dionne, associate professor of audiology in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences. “The use of objective cognitive function and postural balance testing is becoming more standard practice in sports medicine to determine when players are ready to return to the field.”

Beginning in the spring 2012 semester, at the suggestion of the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, Yonker came up with a redesigned concussion management plan for Lamar athletes at risk for concussion.

The new comprehensive plan is designed to provide Lamar student athletes the starting-edge care necessary for such an injury.

“The plan ensures that no athlete returns to the field of play without being fully clear of the injury. It centers on baseline testing in two areas prior to play or practice. The first is ImPACT Testing, which is a computer-generated cognitive exam that each player takes prior to the season. This test is administered by the athletic department.

The second baseline exam is a vestibular balance exam called “Computerized Dynamic Posturography,” which is conducted on specialized equipment in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences.

After suffering a concussion, the player will take the exams again, and baseline measures will be compared to post-injury results. After the symptoms are gone, and the player has returned to baseline values, an athlete will begin the process of returning to full practices and games.

The importance of a measured return to play has become evident over the years, as coming back too quickly leaves an athlete both short term and long term.”

To date, about 300 Lamar athletes have had baseline measures obtained, and eight have had post-concussion testing and management.

We have to make sure that an athlete’s brain has returned to normal before we put them back out there because an elevation in heart rate or blood pressure can negatively affect their brain and their recovery.”

The implementation of this collaborative program between Lamar audiology and athletics has made Lamar University a leader in the Southland Conference for player safety,” said Jason Henderson, Lamar’s athletic director.

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Audiology student’s transformative mission to the Dominican Republic

“Overall, my humanitarian trip was a huge success not only professionally in developing my audiology and healthcare Spanish language skills, but also personally in the long lasting friendships and connections I was able to make with wonderful healthcare professionals,” said Allred. “I would highly recommend the Dominican Republic humanitarian experience to anyone—especially to those who speak a little Spanish.”

“Allred was part of a team that screened about 300 children and 350 hearing aids. He made audiological recommendations to schools, daycares and parents based on the results of the screenings.”

“Allred learned about the clinic at the annual Humanitarian Luncheon at the American Academy of Audiology conference in Boston last year, and became interested in joining their efforts to work with the underprivileged population. He sought housing and travel arrangements through his church, which has a presence in the Dominican Republic, and through his brother, who works for an airline. Ears Inc., an Australian nonprofit, non-denominational Christian association of audiologists, audiometrists and allied health care professionals, sponsors the clinic, and granted permission for the trip.”

“Lamar’s audiology program donated six powerful behind-the-ear hearing aids and hundreds of hearing aid batteries for the mission. The Family Hearing and Sensory Neural Center in Huntsville, operated by Allred’s father and sister, donated 11 behind-the-ear aids, and 61 CIC hearing aids that fit inside the ear canal.”

“Allred, who completed his undergraduate degree at Brigham Young University, plans to join the family practice in Huntsville after completing his doctorate. He served in the Utah Army National Guard from 2000 to 2008, and was stationed in Germany and Nicaragua. His National Guard team also dealt with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, serving both in New Orleans and Abbeville, La. Allred learned to speak and write Spanish fluently during a two-year Latter-day Saints mission to in Oaxaca, Mexico.”

“Dr. Barbara Mathis Vocal Scholarship established

“She was not only a very fine vocalist and a superb teacher of vocal music, but she was a superb researcher.”

“The Lamar University Foundation has announced the establishment of a new endowed scholarship for students majoring in music. The Dr. Barbara Mathis Vocal Scholarship will provide funding for full-time music majors with a concentration in either voice or vocal performance.”

“I had the privilege of working with Barbara for about 20 years,” said Kurt Gilman, interim chair of the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music. “She was not only a very fine vocalist and a superb teacher of vocal music, but she was a superb researcher. She did extensive studies on the anatomy of the vocal chords and how singing is managed by the various anatomical systems.”

“Mathis was a long-standing music professor at Lamar, where she taught a variety of voice classes including studio voice, language dictions, structure and function of the voice, and graduate vocal methods.”

“She knew the business inside and out, and that’s what made her an exemplary teacher,” Gilman said. “It is always an honor when a faculty member of long tenure leaves and then endows a scholarship. It’s always a special thing.”

“After 22 years of service at Lamar, Mathis retired during the summer of 2006. Upon her retirement, former students presented a two-hour recital in her honor. The initial contributions to the endowed scholarship came from these students, along with her friends and colleagues.”

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“This was a remarkable opportunity for Steven and for Lamar Audiology,” said Vickie Dionne, associate professor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences. “Steven is the first Lamar student to participate in a humanitarian audiology program, but I hope he won’t be the last.”