

SIGHTS and SOUNDS

SUMMER 2025



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION
LAMAR UNIVERSITY

— NEWSLETTER —

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Hello!

I am Golden Wright, privileged to serve as the Dean of the College of Fine Arts & Communication at Lamar University. Our college is a dynamic hub housing an array of talented individuals, including students, staff, and faculty. Through this monthly newsletter, we aim to shine a spotlight on the exceptional achievements of these individuals across various disciplines within the fine arts and communication fields.

Our college boasts an exceptional student body, each pursuing their passions in fields ranging from artistry to speech language pathology, interpretation, and performance. Student success will always be our core mission here in the College of Fine Arts & Communication. In this issue, we would like to take the opportunity to introduce some of our vibrant and talented students to you. These students represent come from an array of different areas and disciplines across our college.

At the heart of our college is the profound connectivity we foster among students, faculty, and staff through the common thread of communication. Each distinct area within our college relies on communication in its own unique way. Communication serves as the cornerstone of each departments' success within the college.

From the multifaceted realm of communication and media, utilizing mediums such as television, radio, social media, and newspapers to disseminate information, to the evocative storytelling of music majors who convey emotions and narratives through voice or instruments. From the invaluable contributions of speech and hearing sciences, enhancing our ability to communicate effectively, and improving our quality of life, to the empowering field of deaf studies, which enables individuals to serve as vital mediators in communication. The immersive experiences offered by theatre and dance provide an escape from reality through the interplay of movement and text. And lastly, the visual eloquence of art captures moments and places, transporting us to new dimensions and inspiring our imagination.

We hope this newsletter illuminates all of the possibilities that our College provides. We are immensely grateful for the unwavering support of our surrounding community, which generously provides funding for scholarships, new equipment, and invaluable learning opportunities. Thank you!

“THE BEST KEPT SECRET...”



Golden Wright
College of Fine Arts & Communication, Dean

CONGRATULATIONS!

OUR SUMMER 2025 GRADUATES

Abbas Ali Behmanesh

Lillian Grace Brunner

Ivana Laura Camarillo

Tonene Denise Carrierre

Cassandra Dominguez Cowley

Eric Leslie Gonzales

Barbara Mabry Hagen

Hannah Elise Huff

Stanton Dashad King

Jade Nicole Kisner

Alexander Langston

Kenzie Ann-Louise Marriott

Michael Thomas McCulloch

Taaliyah Aleixs Miner

Gabrielle Lee Reed

Paul Kingsley Simmons

Garrett Brock Smith

Bryan Thomas Sutherland



Illustrating Italy

The Department of Art & Design spent their summer surrounded by the beauty, culture and art of Italy. The nearly month long trip, in partnership with the Lamar University History Department and Santa Reparata International School of Art, was hosted in beautiful Florence. In addition, students also visited Rome and Venice.

This trip has provided our students many opportunities. They have visited many museums and historical sites and also had the opportunity to visit the Venice Biennale for architecture and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection of modern and contemporary art.

Recent graduate, Logan Comeaux said the trip to Italy was a wonderful experience, *"There was so much to see!"*

"Every time I think we can't see anymore great art, the group is taken to another amazing place," says art student, Andrew Martinez.

Check out some of the photos from the trip on page 5! We look forward to seeing where the Department of Art & Design may venture next!



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Excellence in the Media

In June, the Press Club of Southeast Texas hosted the 34th Annual, Excellence In the Media Awards, where Lamar University's Department of Communication & Media had stand-out success.

The Department walked home with a combined 75 awards earned by students, alumni, and faculty members. The tally includes 16 awards for current students, 43 for alumni, and 16 for Lamar University faculty and staff. These wins highlight the strong, ongoing connection between the university and the greater community.

The Press Club draws its membership from Jefferson, Orange, Hardin, Liberty, Chambers, Jasper, Tyler, Polk and Newton counties, with Beaumont acting as the central gathering point. Press Club members are professionals in media, public relations, academia, public affairs, and corporate communication and public information. Providing students in the Department of Communication & Media excellent networking opportunities.

This past year, Lamar University's own Andy Coughlan, Director of Student Publications and Instructor served as the

President of the Press Club, and Stephan Malick, Assistant Director of Student Publications and Instructor, served as the Secretary. Both of these incredible faculty members have long histories of mentoring student journalists and work hard to find opportunities and support for Lamar University's budding media professionals.

In addition to the annual award ceremony, the Press Club also awards a Newsmaker of the Year Award, and supports communication scholarships at Lamar University. They also provide free memberships to any Lamar students that attend their Fall mixer!

From classroom to newsroom, the Department of Communication & Media continues to be a launch pad for talented storytellers, and the Press Club remains a valuable part of that journey.

We are extremely proud of the resounding success at the 34th Annual Excellence In the Media awards and look forward to seeing all of the amazing success stories in the upcoming academic year!



MASTERING THE CLASSROOM

With Scott Cohen

Did you know the Department of Deaf Studies & Deaf Education offers a hybrid Master of Science in Deaf Education while partnering with the Texas School for the Deaf?

This past May, Instructor Scott Cohen graduated with his Ph.D., allowing him to become an assistant professor.

This summer was Cohen's first semester instructing full-time. The structure of the program is 95% asynchronous online and 5% in-person, which allows students from across the country to participate and work towards furthering their education.

"We had more students from out of state than in state this year, so our reputation is expanding across the country," explains Cohen.

This summer, the in-person portions were taught in Austin at the Texas School for the Deaf. Many of them had never visited the school, let alone the bustling city of Austin, so tours were arranged to help them feel right at home.

"It was a good experience for them to see the TSD campus," Cohen shared. *"We toured classrooms, helping them envision their own future classrooms."*

Students engaged in a variety of hands-on and group activities. One major project challenged students to create ASL-based educational resources for their future classrooms.

"There are many ASL videos and educational resources available for teachers but sadly, many teachers do not incorporate them in their lessons," Cohen explains, *"I feel it is important for teachers to be intentional on incorporating bilingual resources with deaf students – not just resources, but assessments as well. 99% of assessments are conducted in English."*

Cohen is proud of the work his students accomplished and is excited to see how the skills they learned translate into classrooms around the country.



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION

LAMAR UNIVERSITY

Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music



A LEGACY *in harmony...*

The Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music is proud to announce the creation of a new endowed scholarship in memory of Kay and Curtis Doucet.

Kathryn "Kay" D. Doucet dedicated over 30 years of her career to Port Neches-Groves Independent School District as a choir teacher, a role she cherished deeply. Her passion for music extended beyond the classroom as she served as a member of the choir and later directed the Handbells and the Chancel Choir at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Nederland, Texas where she was a member for over 40 years. Kay was a god-fearing woman who walked by faith every day, embodying the values of hope and love. A proud graduate of Port Neches-Groves High School, Class of 1972. Her community and the many lives she influenced held a special place in her heart. Kay graduated from Lamar University with a Bachelor of Science in Music and was a member of the concert choir as a student.

Curtis W. Doucet, Jr. was also an active member of Trinity Presbyterian Church, where he served for several years as the choir director and then as a choir member. He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, former Boy Scout leader and an Eagle Scout. Curtis was a musician and band director for more than 40 years. Through his love of music and teaching he influenced many hearts young and old. Curtis also graduated from Lamar University with a Master of Music Education.

In celebration of this remarkable donation, the Mary Morgan Moore hosted a small gathering of the Doucet's friends and family for a private performance from Three Baritones and a Tenor, Lamar University's very own barbershop quartet.

It was a time of joy, love and celebration of the lives of Kay and Curtis. Their son, Rusty Doucet, remembers them fondly.

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"Music was their life. It's how they met each other. They sang in different A Capella groups together, they sang in the choir at their church together for many years, they loved it," explains Rusty, "My mother always used to say that it's not a job if you love what you do, and she woke up with a smile every day, because she got to do what she loved."

Kay left all who knew her with her favorite phrase, "Take Care of Business!"



"That was her biggest thing. If you ask any of her former students about "TCOB" they'll know exactly what you mean!" Rusty laughs.

"It was a safe place in her room. Whether you were an outcast, valedictorian, or if you were the prom queen, it didn't matter. Everyone was equal. But she expected everyone to "Take Care of Business."

All of us in the College of Fine Arts & Communication look forward to seeing how the Kay and Curtis Doucet Memorial Scholarship in Music helps our students for years to come.

Gifts to the Doucet Memorial Scholarship may be made online at www.lamar/give or by check and mailed to P. O. Box 11500, Beaumont, TX 77710. Please call the Lamar University Foundation at 409-880-2117 with any questions.





The Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences provided international humanitarian aid in Honduras over the summer.

The Department was contacted by the Rotary Club of Beaumont. Each year, member Dana Timaeus gathers a large team of professionals from all backgrounds to provide a variety of services to the people on the island of Utila. By including the Department of Speech & Hearing sciences, the team was able to provide education specific to child development, speech and language, and developmental delays.

Sarah Saldaña, Clinical Supervisor and Instructor, Licensed Speech-Language Pathologist, CCC-SLP, and her assistant for the trip, Alexandra Simeonides Bernard, Administrative Coordinator and licensed SLPA, traveled to Utila as part of this team.

Preparation for this trip was extensive.

"Initially, preparing for the presentation logistics was challenging due to limited resources and technological constraints," explains Saldaña, "Dana explained that electricity on the island is scarce, and scheduled power outages are sometimes necessary to conserve energy. Internet access is also unreliable in many areas, making it difficult to determine the best way to deliver and share information."

Despite technological concerns, culturally, Saldaña and Bernard had an advantage since they are both bilingual Spanish speakers.

Saldaña also spent months communicating and collaborating with a variety of contacts before arriving on the island to gather as many details as possible and ensure thorough preparation.

HEARING HANDS

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11...

Once there, Saldaña partnered with the local Methodist church, who kindly offered their facility for her presentations. She also collaborated with a local preschool and two local clinics.

"The preschool welcomed me into their classrooms to observe and engage with the children," shares Saldaña, "In addition, I visited two local clinics to share introductory information about our mission while on the island."

During the trip, Saldaña aimed to offer introductory education on child development, speech and language, and developmental delays by providing materials and strategies to parents, preschool teachers and medical personnel.

"The hardest part was not being able to bring this work home with me, at least not yet," explains Saldaña. "My hope is to build a lasting relationship with this community and, one day, create reliable ways to offer ongoing support, perhaps even through telehealth at our clinic. For now, though, having to leave it at just a single presentation was deeply challenging. It made me realize how much more there is to do and how strong the desire is to keep helping beyond that moment."

Saldaña hopes and plans to return to the island next summer.

"So far, the feedback I've received is that there's a strong desire for more information, as well as support for a variety of individual cases," says Saldaña.

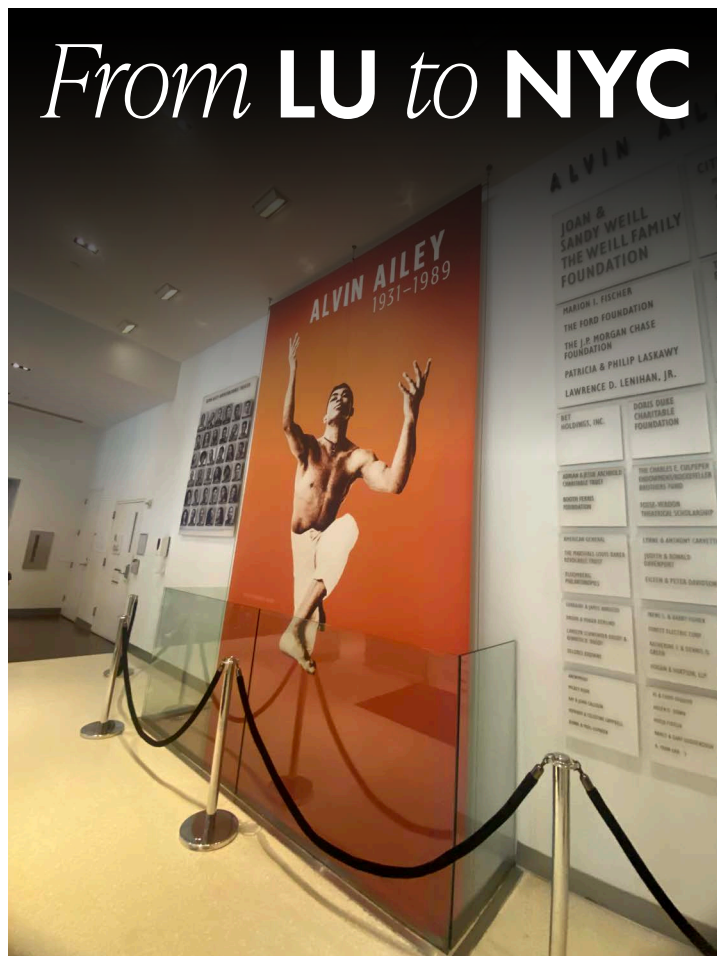
Saldaña and Bernard were both deeply moved by the people of Utila.

"These parents and children touched my heart in a way I can't stop thinking about, and I'm eager to go back," Saldaña explains, "There's so much untapped potential on that island, and I truly believe that if more of them had just a little more knowledge, they could unlock incredible possibilities for their children's futures."

"My experiences on the island interacting with parents and children was a rewarding one! This is my first trip to Utila and I can say this experience has helped me grow as in the SLP-A field. I learned as much as I could in the classrooms and soaked in as much information as possible, making this experience one I will never forget!" says Bernard.

Saldaña shared her final thoughts from this amazing, humanitarian experience. ***"Every voice matters,"*** she explains, ***"In every language, mode or method, communication is connection."***





Lamar University dance major Kaleigh Alfred spent 5 weeks in New York City this summer, attending the world-renowned Alvin Ailey Summer Intensive; a life changing experience that she is excited to share.

Kaleigh began dancing at age 4 and immersed herself in nearly every style of dance. By age 13, she was introduced to the legacy of Alvin Ailey, Lester Horton, and Martha Graham. So, when she heard about auditions for the prestigious summer program, she didn't hesitate. ***"I just knew I had to make that drive to Dallas and audition,"*** she said.

She recalls the moment she was notified she had been accepted into the program. She was at a dance team practice when she received the acceptance email. ***"I literally screamed,"*** she laughed. ***"My team thought something was wrong! I was like, 'Y'all, I just got accepted into the Ailey Summer Intensive!'"***

The five-week intensive brought dancers to the heart of New York City from across the globe, and Kaleigh was thrilled to be surrounded by peers from places like France, Italy, Canada, and Africa. ***"It was surreal,"*** she said. ***"It was like trying your favorite food for the first time. You didn't know what to expect, but it blew your mind."***

Each day began with an early subway ride to the Ailey School, followed by full days of Ballet, Horton, Graham, Contemporary Ballet and Somatic Practice. Kaleigh was even selected to be a part of one of the three Repertory groups. For her audition, there were 76 dancers and only 25 were chosen.

Her group performed an original piece by Cain Coleman, assisted by Sara Richter, during the program's culminating showcase, The Summer Sizzler. ***"It was a really good vibe,"*** she said. ***"Everyone in the cast brought so much charisma."***

Throughout the program, Kaleigh kept a detailed notebook of lessons, corrections, choreographic notes and self-reflections. She says the experience has reshaped her perspective in a profound way.

"It changed how I approach dance, but also how I approach life. I learned to show up, 100%. Not just physically, but mentally and spiritually. To not just be there, but be present," she explains.

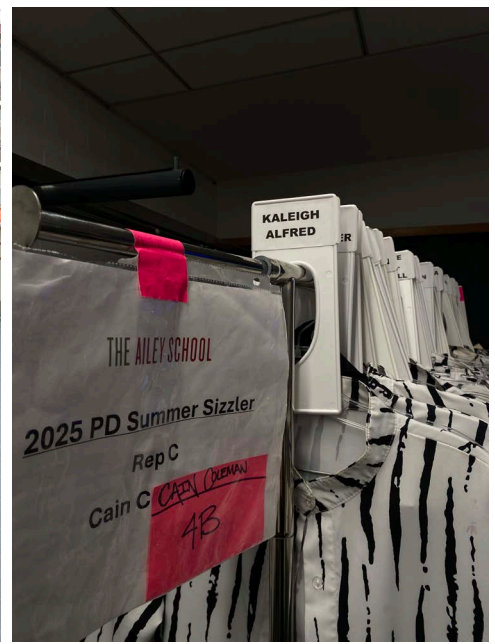
She leaves advice to any student pursuing prestigious and intimidating opportunities.

"Just do it," she said. ***"Don't second-guess yourself. You grow the most when you step outside your comfort zone. Even if you know nothing about it, just go for it."***

As she heads into her last year at Lamar, Kaleigh carries with her not just new skills and connections, but a deeper sense of purpose. ***"I'm not the same dancer, or person, I was when I walked into that program,"*** she said.

Kaleigh would like to thank the friends she made at the program for being her rock during the 5-week program.

Check out photos from Kaleigh's Alvin Ailey experience on the next page!





This summer, the Dishman Art Museum hosted *"Highlights from the Permanent Collection: Summertime"* curated by Chloe Thompson.

After 10 years of dedication, Dennis Kiel, Museum Director retired in May. As a parting gift, he gave Thompson, an alumni of the Department Art & Design and current Administrative Assistant at the Dishman Art Museum, the opportunity to curate her own show. After much consideration, Thompson decided to curate *"Highlights from the Permanent Collection: Summertime."*

"The first thing I did was look at possible opening dates," explains Thompson, *"I found the perfect date. June 20th. There were no other local art openings that day, and I noticed that that was actually the first day of summer."*

The date is what inspired Thompson to choose the "Summertime" theme.

She scoured the storage facility for any and everything "summer." This involved not only depictions of summertime activities, but colors, feelings, emotions evoked, and more. What resulted was a wonderfully vibrant and varied exhibition of all things "summer."

Thompson is extremely proud of the success of her first curated exhibition.

"I learned a lot about curating an exhibition, and I had an amazing time doing it," says Thompson.

As a result of this exhibition, Thompson has been able to strengthen her relationships with other local art organizations, including the Beaumont Art League, the Art Studio, Inc. and the Art Museum of Southeast Texas.

Thompson was even interviewed for the Beaumont Enterprise and KVLU's weekly program, "State of the Arts."

"It's been really nice having a whole community in the arts to lean on and to get tips from," says Thompson, *"Overall, everyone in the art community has been telling me how proud they are of me, which means a lot."*

Recently, Thomson has expanded her professional horizons and joined the board at the Beaumont Art League, serving as the chair of the Shows and Facilities Committee, which involves the selection of themes, planning the layouts and possibly even serving as a judge for juried exhibitions.

"Every opportunity is a stepping stone to further your goals. This exhibition was a huge stepping stone for me," explains Thompson.

See photos from the exhibition on page 15!



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



John Constable
Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes
1825



Amplifying LU VOICES

Did you keep up with "On Campus @ Lamar University" over the summer?

"On Campus @ Lamar University" provides all departments and organizations at Lamar with a platform to converse about events or news within their part of the university. The show features news and views of Lamar University hosted by students speaking with other students, faculty and staff from across the campus.

This summer, "On Campus @ Lamar University" hosted a variety of interviews with many familiar faces, including Carlee Smith – Associate Director, New Student Programs about New Student Orientations, the Lamar

Marketing Team, Gene Theodori - Associate Provost of Academic Affairs and Sarah Morton, Mitchell Caldwell – Communication and Media Alumni, Hayden Jackson - Director of Cardinal Activity Board, and more!

If you or someone you know would like to secure a slot on "On Campus @ Lamar University" for the upcoming academic year, reach out to Station Manager, Jason Miller at jmmiller@lamar.edu. Act fast! Slots fill up very quickly!

"On Campus @ Lamar University" airs Mondays at 7:50 a.m. and podcasts the same day on Spotify. Catch up on previous episodes at kvlu.org or on Spotify!

CAN'T MISS THIS!

AUG 18 — SEPT 6

Faculty Exhibition

Dishman Art Museum

Opening Reception: August 29th, 5:00PM - 7:00 PM

AUG 28

Comm-Unity

Communication Building

12:30PM - 2:00 PM

GIVE NOW, EMPOWER THE FUTURE!

Your generous support for the College of Fine Arts & Communication at Lamar University ensures that the arts and communication fields continue to grow and thrive. Your contribution, no matter the size, makes a lasting impact.

Donate today and invest in collaboration, innovation, creation and excellence.



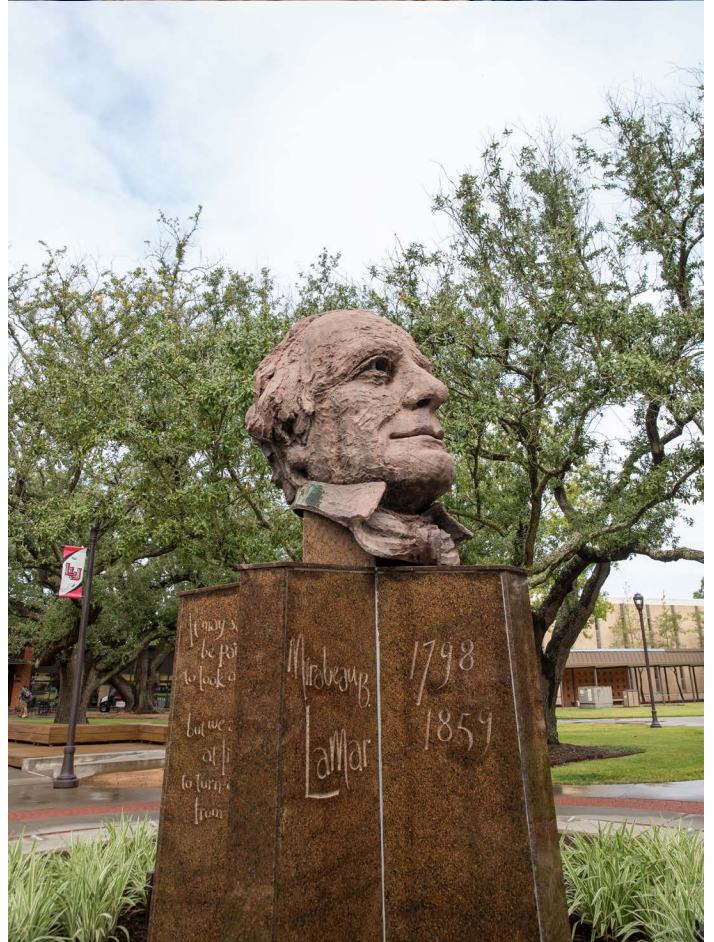
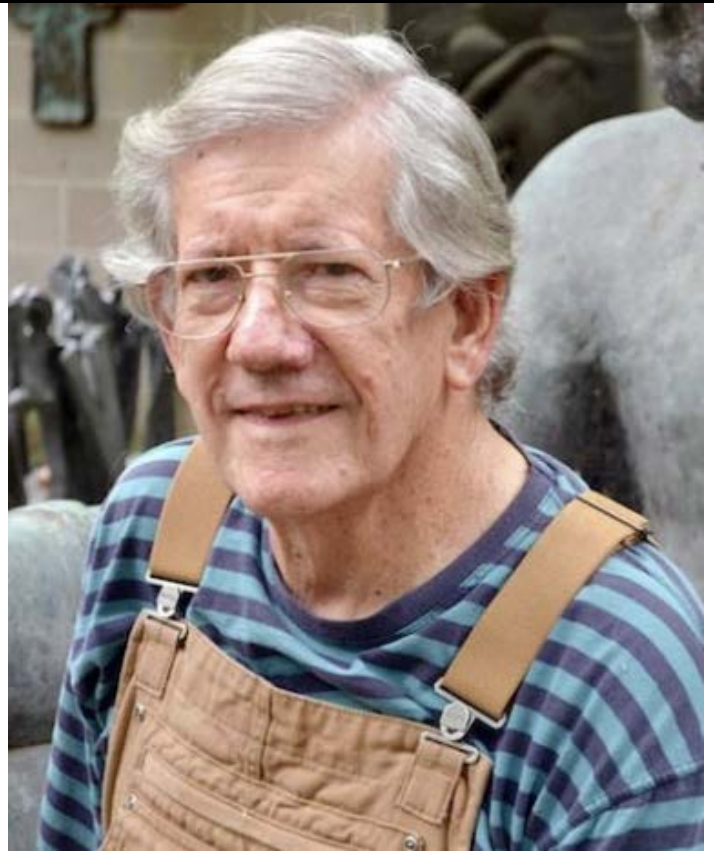
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Remembering David Cargill

Sculptor David Cargill, 96, whose evocative secular bronzes and powerful religious images are installed in public spaces throughout the country, died July 10th of an accumulation of years at the compound he built in Beaumont in the 1960s, attended by his far-flung daughters, Idakatherine and Chancel. His award-winning reverse-relief Stations of the Cross are built into Philip Johnson's Chapel of St. Basil in Houston. There are some grand projects still unfinished: An enormous scavenged stump of Beaumont's century-old O'Brien Oak still sits in his driveway where he had it deposited in 1978, swinging from the hoist of a giant tow truck, after a lightning strike had doomed the famous old tree. Most of his projects, though, simply bear witness to his steadfast patience. Interlude, which he considered his masterpiece, is a life-sized couple carved from a two-ton block of marble he imported in the early 1960s, after he returned from a year in Florence, Italy. It took him sixty years of carving and polishing before he finally unveiled it, at age 92, at his 2021 show at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas.

David Cargill held a degree from the Pratt Institute in New York (where he met his wife, painter Patricia Chickowsky) and an advanced degree from Cranbrook Academy in Michigan, but he returned to southeast Texas to build his life and family. He held a weekly discussion group right up to the end of his life. He claimed to live by a daunting family motto – ***"Why do it the easy way when the hard way works?"*** – though he also said, with complete honesty, that he never did anything he didn't want to do. Everyone loved him anyway.

In lieu of flowers you may wish to make a gift to the David L. Cargill Scholarship in Art through the Lamar University Foundation, P. O. Box 11500, Beaumont, TX 77710. www.lamar.edu/give Any questions may be directed to the Foundation at 409-880-2117.





COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION
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COLLABORATE - INNOVATE - CREATE

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