

FINE ARTS NEWS

College of Fine Arts **FALL 2020**



LEAD ON.™

TCU



From the Dean

First and foremost, I hope this issue of *Fine Arts News* finds you healthy, happy and safe.

To say that the year 2020 has been a constantly challenging and changing world is an understatement. We have dealt with the impact of the ongoing global pandemic, and conversations around racial injustice have further focused us all on the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) work at TCU and beyond.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will read about many events from our most recent academic year, including how our students, faculty and staff adapted at the onset of the pandemic and the ways in which many of the themes of DEI were spotlighted through the arts.

Fine arts students, faculty and staff were distinctly challenged by the sudden move to distance learning this spring when the COVID-19 pandemic first necessitated social distancing. Canceled performances, lack of access to rehearsal spaces, limited resources in quarantine at home, sound delays during private lessons via Zoom—the list goes on. Yet, extensive training over the summer, new technology, and a dedication to flexibility have prepared College of Fine Arts faculty and staff to teach and

support our students this year no matter the modality.

Following the unconscionable killing of George Floyd in late May, the College of Fine Arts reaffirmed its stance against racism. The arts are a powerful and transformative way to honor, teach and learn about cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds that may be different than one's own, yet we acknowledge there is a continued, crying need to advocate for equity and justice on campus and off. The university's recently announced Race and Reconciliation Initiative to examine the history and impact that racism, slavery and the Confederacy have had on TCU is one such way that our college will join together with all of TCU to shape a greater and more equitable future for our university.

In this issue, you will read about how our students and faculty have given back to the community through their modes of art, have had once-in-a-lifetime learning opportunities thanks to the generosity of others, and have thrived in new facilities on campus. There's more to celebrate with news of the newly-opened TCU Music Center. In addition to housing the world-class Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU, the new building provides invaluable enhanced

I continue to be inspired by the perseverance, creativity and eagerness to impact change that our College of Fine Arts students, faculty and staff have demonstrated and will continue to demonstrate in the future.

resources in support of our award-winning band, orchestra and percussion programs.

During such a crucial time in our world, I continue to be inspired by the perseverance, creativity and eagerness to impact change that our College of Fine Arts students, faculty and staff have demonstrated and will continue to demonstrate in the future.

While I typically would invite you to join us at performances, exhibitions and events in the upcoming year, we are unable to welcome in-person audiences to campus this fall and until further notice due to the ongoing pandemic. Instead, I invite you to look out for our planned virtual and digital offerings by visiting finearts.tcu.edu/events for the latest information about upcoming opportunities to see our students and faculty shine. We look forward to the time that we come together again in person to celebrate the incredible fine arts at TCU.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Gipson

TCU Music Center

The long-awaited TCU Music Center is now open for the 2020-21 academic year. Located on the campus' east side, the building is the next piece of the university's new Creative Commons that connects the Mary Coats Burnett Library, the J.M. Moudy Visual Arts and Communication Building, Rees-Jones Hall and the Fine Arts Building, which opened last year.

The Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU (VCCH at TCU) is located inside the TCU Music Center. While TCU is unable to welcome in-person audiences at performances for the time being, this incredible concert hall further establishes the School of Music as an arts education leader. Uniquely, the

VCCH at TCU is the only concert hall in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in which the audience can sit on all sides of the musicians when they perform, creating an unparalleled experience between the performers and the audience.

In addition, the new TCU Music Center offers School of Music students, faculty and staff incredible new resources, including more than 7,500 square feet of band and orchestra rehearsal space, as well as instructional facilities, studios and practice rooms. In the future, when health and safety guidelines allow, the entire 200+ member, award-winning Horned Frog Marching Band will be able to rehearse indoors together. ■



ON THE COVER

DanceTCU performs *Necessitate*, choreographed by Elijah Alhadji Gibson, for the AIDS Outreach Center of Tarrant County benefit dance concert in February 2020. Photo: Alyssa Peter Photography



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TCU alumnus Kent Roeger is among the first responders to use PPE created by Nick Bontrager.

College in the time of Coronavirus

TCU fine arts students and faculty adapt to the new normal

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the stories that people will remember most about 2020. Stay-at-home orders, schools closed, events canceled, social gatherings missed. While the pandemic has affected all of us in one way or another, it has presented unique challenges for higher education and especially for a college that creates music, live theatre, art and so much more that is meant to be shared, celebrated and enjoyed.

In mid-March, TCU extended Spring Break for students by a week, giving faculty and staff just a handful of days to shift more than 3,100 course sections from face-to-face instruction to an online delivery format. Virtually teaching and learning the fine arts is not ideal, yet TCU students and faculty found numerous resourceful ways to apply their talents in a new socially distanced world.

Working with colleagues across campus, **Nick Bontrager**, associate professor in the School of Art, used 3D printers in the Mary Coats Burnett Library, as well as in his home, to make personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care personnel and first responders. TCU-made face shields were donated to health care workers at Cook Children's Hospital, and filter adapters for scuba masks were provided to Fort Worth first responders.



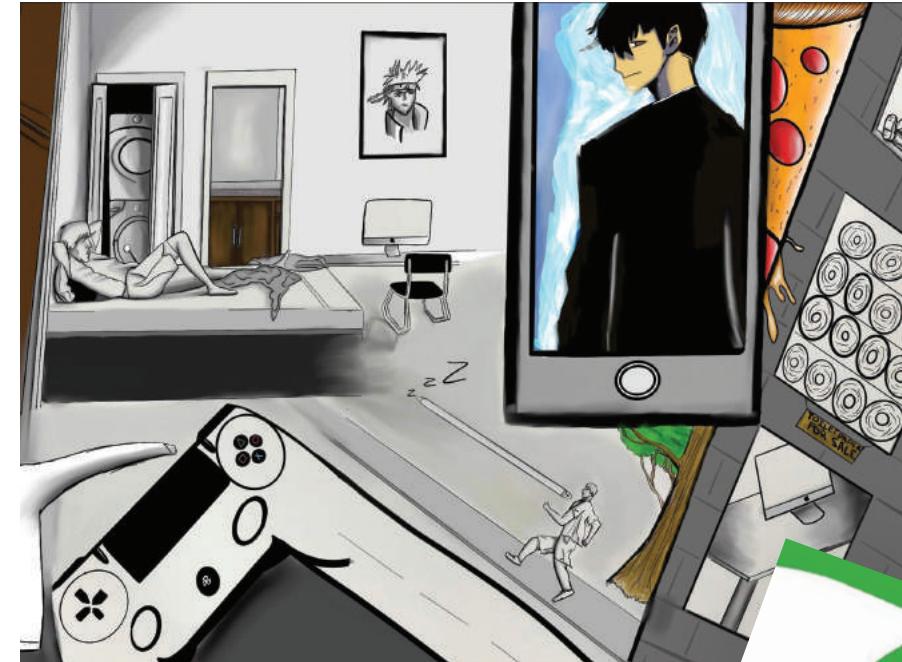
Student Maddie DeCastro makes cloth face coverings after taking a sewing class at TCU with instructor Stephanie Bailey.

Likewise, fashion merchandising students **Maddie DeCastro, Grace Poimboeuf, Annie Zeller, Jordan Varat** and **Jenna Wide** along with their instructor **Stephanie Bailey** sewed cloth face coverings to donate to local health care workers.

Musical theatre students **D'Mariel Jones, Indigo Crandell, Brett Rawlings, Nijel Smith, Kylee Brown, Jose Ruiz-Gonzalez, Tasia Jewel** and **Jaden Lewis** and music student **Sophie Bourgeois** all lent their voices to a virtual mashup performance of the *TCU Alma Mater* to connect Horned Frogs while they were away from campus.

Despite many canceled performances in the School of Music, the **TCU Concert Chorale** and **University Singers** remotely recorded student **Patrick Vu**'s original composition "Day is Dying," a choral piece written to instill a sense of optimism and faith in audiences during uncertain times.

Students in the School for Classical & Contemporary Dance made use of their space at home to rehearse. Freshman ballet major **Lyvi Baldner** was among the students who took over the TCU Admissions Instagram to share a day in her life during distance learning at home.



Art: Adam Verhelle, digital drawing

The students in **Dan Jian**'s Life Studies art class had limited access to supplies and a lack of studio space while under stay-at-home orders across the country. Jian pivoted her teaching plans, asking students to channel their experiences to develop the course's final project, Quarantine Panorama.

Graphic design student **Derek Bowers** was hired to design a new hand sanitizer label in just one week for a distillery that shifted from producing spirits to making hand sanitizer at the onset of the pandemic.



Label design: Derek Bowers for The Adirondack Distilling Company



Art: Andrea Lopes, ball pen and watercolor on paper

A FABulous First Year

The newly restructured Department of Design settles into its new home



PHOTO: GLEN ELLMAN

After nearly a year and a half of construction, the Fine Arts Building opened on the TCU campus at the beginning of the fall 2019 semester. A shared space—dubbed “the FAB”—for the departments of design and fashion merchandising, the building provided a much-needed facilities upgrade with new equipment, larger classrooms and state-of-the-art design labs.

It also presented an opportunity to bring together related programs that were previously spread across campus; the newly minted Department of Design officially merged the graphic design and interior design programs, aligning two fields of study that rely on many of the same

foundational principles.

Located on the campus’ east side, the FAB was established as part of the new Creative Commons that connects the Mary Coats Burnett Library, the J.M. Moudy Visual Arts and Communication Building, Rees-Jones Hall and the new TCU Music Center.

Following a successful grand opening event in August 2019, students, faculty and staff settled into the FAB, quickly finding a new sense of community and inspiration.

“Design students are benefiting, seeing the work of other creatives daily, which is influencing their own work,” said Alyssa Humphries Stewart, assistant professor and

director of the Center for Lighting Education. “It has led to several successful cross-discipline collaborations.”

One such opportunity provided real world experience for both interior design and graphic design majors. Students teamed up for a design charrette (a quick brainstorming and sketching session) where the graphic design students developed branding ideas for the interior design students’ retail store concepts. The overall projects were critiqued by the professionals at CallisonRTKL, a design firm in Dallas, as part of its ongoing partnership with the interior design program at TCU.

Another newfound mode of collaboration was the inaugural Day of Design event. The



PHOTO: RACHEL FUNK

department invited alumni of the graphic design, interior design and architectural lighting design programs to submit their professional work for inclusion in the first-ever alumni showcase. Displayed in the FAB during Homecoming Weekend last fall, the show brought together alumni to celebrate their accomplishments as well as the new building — a joyful occasion that the department hopes to continue in the future.

These successes reinforce the ways that the FAB and its state-of-the-art facilities impact students now and as future design professionals.

“Having graphic design, interior design and architectural lighting design students in the same building allows for a more natural exchange of ideas between programs,” said David Elizalde, assistant professor of graphic design. “I believe this inspires the students and broadens their abilities to be creative problem solvers.”

Interior design major Hannah Emerson says the FAB offers amenities, such as a dedicated desk in one of the design studios and computers equipped with specialty design programs, which help her, and her fellow students, continue to be successful in their studies.

“I have found myself to be incredibly productive and determined in the FAB,” said Emerson. “The sophomore studio is adjacent to the glass garage door. Sometimes we find ourselves studying with the door open on a beautiful day. I love having

Graphic and interior design students collaborate during a design charrette (a quick brainstorming and sketching session) to create branding for retail store concepts.



PHOTO: ALYSSA HUMPHRIES STEWART

The FAB’s lighting lab has an operable ceiling that students can use to simulate commercial and residential ceiling heights when working on lighting projects. The design of the ceiling is flexible to easily change the light fixtures as technology advances.



PHOTO: DUSTY CROCKER

Equipped to host up to four classes simultaneously, the FAB’s spacious interior design studio has an open floor plan with a glass garage door. Design faculty members note that students spend more time in the FAB, providing a greater sense of identity as a design student on the TCU campus.

FAB FAST FACTS

33,000
square feet

4

computer labs

9

State-of-the-art
learning spaces

Serves

370+

design and fashion
merchandising majors

1

jury room where students
can present their work
for critique

PHOTO: CASSIE SCHMIDT



The Day of Design includes a showcase of alumni work during Homecoming Weekend 2019.

my own desk in the studio. I have been able to personalize it by pinning up my work.”

Despite time on campus last academic year being cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Elizalde and Humphries Stewart agree that they have already seen an increase in the quality of student work thanks to the FAB, which they say will continue to attract top students to TCU’s Department of Design.

“When prospective students and their families visit, [the FAB is] a big indicator for how committed the university is to supporting our programs,” said Humphries Stewart. “Having spaces that...reflect the quality of work that our students and faculty produce will help to recruit the next generation of talented designers.” ■

PHOTO: ALYSSA HUMPHRIES STEWART



Sophomore students in the Fundamentals in Lighting course work on daylight study models in the FAB’s lighting lab.

PHOTO: CASSIE SCHMIDT



Department of Design faculty host the inaugural Day of Design event at the FAB to celebrate the accomplishments of alumni.

PHOTO: ALYSSA HUMPHRIES STEWART



The Department of Design hosts the International Jewish Youth Conference in the FAB’s jury room. The jury room is a space where classes can gather for critiques, an important part of the learning process in the Department of Design.

Sustainability in Fashion

Inaugural sustainability event at TCU spurs special invite from Cotton Incorporated executive to fashion merchandising students, professor

“When you’re studying textiles, you inevitably have to understand sustainability,” said Shweta Reddy, Ph.D., associate professor of fashion merchandising.

Sustainability is a hot topic in the fashion industry, encompassing social, cultural and ecological issues—from sourcing and the supply chain to production and product afterlife.

Reddy teaches this subject matter in the course Sustainability Issues in the Textile and Apparel Industry, a class that helps students understand real-world problems and identify possible solutions. Last year, three of her students put passion into practice, gaining an insider’s view of sustainable solutions and emerging practices, thanks to a special visit to Cotton Incorporated, a nonprofit that encourages the use and desirability of cotton and cotton products.

Sustainability Day

In 2019, Reddy successfully received a grant from Cotton Incorporated in partnership with Jay Sang Ryu, Ph.D., also an associate professor of fashion merchandising. The grant, Cotton Sustainability: Inquiring, Discovering, & Sharing Knowledge, provided funds for the Department of Fashion Merchandising to host TCU’s inaugural Sustainability Day last November. Fashion merchandising majors presented research projects on issues in the cotton supply chain, and three sustainability experts served as guest speakers for a panel discussion open to the campus community.

Cotton Incorporated’s Vice President of Marketing, Mark Messura, was one of those panelists. During the student presentations, he took notice of three standout students: Kenadi Paredes, Jordan Varat and Annie Zeller. ➤



Left to right: Jordan Varat, Kenadi Paredes, Associate Professor Shweta Reddy, Ph.D., and Annie Zeller visit the Cotton Incorporated headquarters in Cary, N.C., after being invited by the nonprofit’s vice president of marketing.





PHOTO: SHWETA REDDY

"I think he saw that they were passionate about sustainability," said Reddy.

Indeed, Messura extended an all-expenses-paid invitation for Reddy and her three students to visit the Cotton Incorporated headquarters in Cary, N.C., to get a firsthand look at how the cotton industry stays on the leading edge of fashion.

An "Eye-Opening" Experience

On a sunny morning before the start of the spring 2020 semester, Messura personally welcomed Reddy and her students to Cotton Incorporated. While touring the headquarters, the group viewed all-new cotton designs, met with a textile designer, saw how yarn is made, and learned about distressing denim with lasers, which is a more sustainable practice than other distressing methods.

"The experience at Cotton Incorporated was eye opening," said Varat. "I was able to apply what I had learned in my textiles and sustainability courses to real industry

The students learn how lasers can add unique finishes to denim, a process that is more sustainable than other distressing methods.

conversations, which was an opportunity I will forever be grateful for."

Reddy said she was proud of Varat and her fellow students who proved capable of holding high-level conversations with industry professionals based on the research the students conducted and the material covered in class.

Above: Recycling denim is one of the important sustainability initiatives of Cotton Incorporated, which conducts research to benefit every link on the cotton supply chain and develops promotions that encourage the use and desirability of cotton and cotton products.



PHOTO: SHWETA REDDY

"The students were able to ask very valid, practical questions, so I knew that they were making connections between the concepts. It was no longer 'just a concept,'" said Reddy.

Zeller said the most interesting thing she learned at Cotton Incorporated was how they laser treat denim.

"To distress denim traditionally, it requires a lot of labor and a lot of water because they wash the jeans over and over to get the distressed look," said Zeller. "Cotton Incorporated has a laser that can create the distressed look without wasting water."

Fashion Forward

The visit to Cotton Incorporated had a considerable impact on the students and Reddy alike.

Zeller began working on an independent study project with Reddy during the spring, putting her Sustainability Day research project into action. She worked to educate TCU students about microfibers and petitioned TCU Housing & Residence Life to install microfiber filters on dormitory washing machines.

"What many people don't know is that a lot of our clothing items are made out of synthetic fibers because it is a cheap alternative to natural fibers," said Zeller. "Synthetic fibers affect the environment because they contain plastic microfibers, which shed into the wash water, then get drained to the ocean and create pollution. A practical solution would be to add microfiber filters to washing machines... to catch the microplastics before they end up in the ocean."

The Cotton Incorporated experience only reinforced Varat's career pursuits heading into her senior year at TCU.

"The Cotton Incorporated team solidified my interest in sustainability and inspired me to further pursue this passion of mine," said Varat. "Sustainability will be a driving force in the industry in the coming years, and I was reassured that this is exactly what I want to do." ■



PHOTO: SHWETA REDDY

Mark Messura, vice president of marketing at Cotton Incorporated, shows the group how a long bundle of fiber gets twisted into a sliver (rhymes with diver) to make yarn.



PHOTO: SHWETA REDDY

Students view all new cotton designs, which are available in a variety of styles including activewear.

The Impact of the Theatre

Theatre TCU staged readings tell powerful stories of Black characters

In February 2020, a student ensemble gathered in front of approximately 100 audience members to premiere the staged reading of *For Bo: A Play Inspired by the Murder of Botham Jean by Police Officer Amber Guyger*. Written by Theatre TCU Instructor Ayvaunn Penn, *For Bo* is a fictional narrative of the real-life story of Jean, an unarmed Black man, who was murdered by Guyger, a white woman, in Jean's own home in 2018. The Dallas case generated significant media attention and reignited the ongoing conversation around Black civilians and police officers in America.

Through contemporary free verse poetry, rhythm and percussion, *For Bo* explores the issues that lead to Jean's death and how society grapples with the resulting trauma. Penn, who also directed the staged reading, wrote *For Bo* intending to couple it with a post-performance discussion amongst the cast and creative team, the audience and a panel of community members to promote cross-cultural understanding.

Theatre TCU's faculty strive to provide a creative and challenging academic experience for students to broaden their perspectives and grow as artists. One approach to support that important goal is to expose students to new, diverse and thought-provoking work in the classroom, on the stage and in a workshop-like atmosphere, such as a staged reading and talkback.

Freshman Nijel Smith played the titular role, Bo Jones, in the sold-out staged reading of *For Bo*.

"I am a strong believer that theatre has an impact regardless of the medium, atmosphere or even audience," said Smith. "Any performance can affect someone



Theatre TCU students premiered *For Bo*, written by Instructor Ayvaunn Penn, in February 2020 during Black History Month.

else involved, and with a topic as heavy and needed as this [play], I knew my focus and heart needed to be in the right place."

Smith said he felt it was important to be thorough in preparing for the role by reading news coverage of the case and learning about the real-life person who inspired his character.

"Throughout working on this piece—from reading it, to the first rehearsal, to the performance, I let the word 'inspire' be my focus," said Smith. "I wanted to use my voice and my platform to inspire anyone I came in contact with through this process."

Though they had only four rehearsals and one performance, many cast members say the play impacted them. In the post-performance discussion, several cast members agreed they felt it was important to tell this story as a way to pair art with activism.

"It made me even more aware of all that happens that we don't see and gave me a chance to feel the fire of telling a story that people need to hear," said sophomore Gabriel Woodard, who played Bo Jones' brother, B Jones. "*For Bo* made me feel empowered to continue to stand up to the injustice that members of my community face."

Penn said it was "a gift" to have many talented Theatre TCU students bring her work to life in front of an audience for the first time.

"It is a beautiful thing to have *For Bo* premiere with a student cast, because students are the future," said Penn. "The future should carry the burning torch for positive social change."

Penn started the #ForBo Initiative online to use the performing arts as a catalyst for positive social change by fostering

The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center has served as a launchpad for renowned dramatists such as Tony Award Winner Lin-Manuel Miranda (*Hamilton*), Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize Winner August Wilson (*Fences*, *The Piano Lesson*) and Golden Globe Winner Regina Taylor (*Crowns*).

conversations that heal racial divides through empathy, examining issues within the American criminal justice system and promoting healthy relationships between all, but especially Black civilians and police officers. Like Theatre TCU, several other universities and arts organizations around the country joined the #ForBo Initiative and hosted their own readings.

Notably, *For Bo* was chosen this summer as a finalist for the prestigious Eugene O'Neill Theater Center National Playwrights Conference. This honor puts the play among the top five percent of more than 1,500 plays submitted for the conference from around the U.S.

For Bo was just one of the important, based-on-real-life stories that Theatre TCU shared with audiences last year.

In the fall of 2019, student actors presented a staged reading of *Harriet Jacobs*, a play based on Jacobs' 1861 autobiography, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Written by Lydia R. Diamond in 2011, *Harriet Jacobs* is a dramatization of

Jacobs' remarkable journey to escape from slavery—from the horrific sexual abuse she endured to seven years in hiding to her eventual freedom. The staged reading was a part of TCU's interdisciplinary event series, Slavery (De)constructed, to mark the 400th year since the first African slaves arrived in North America.

Penn, who will serve as the directing faculty mentor when Theatre TCU plans to premiere a fully staged production of *For Bo* in February 2021, believes the play has had and will continue to have an influence on social change. She said the addition of choreography to the upcoming full production will also increase the visual and emotional power of the story.

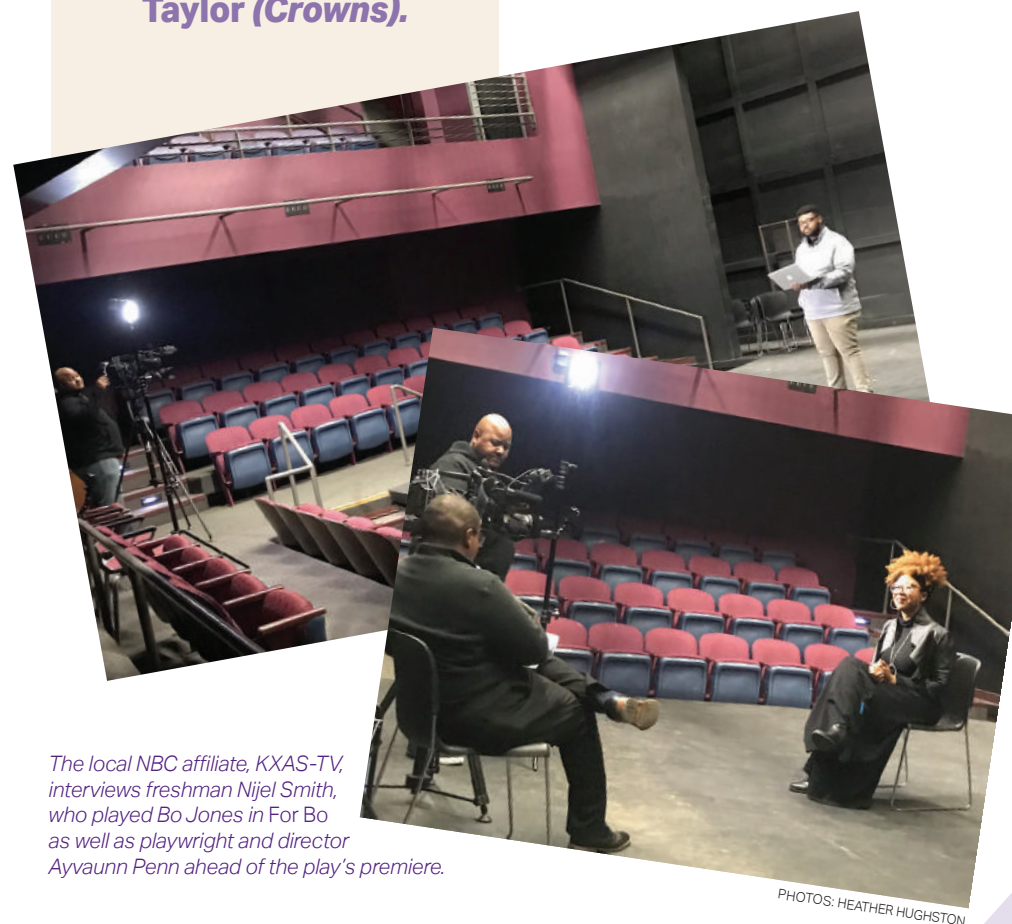
"Listening to attendees [of the staged reading] share their reactions let me know that this play is fulfilling its purpose: raising awareness for those who did not know about the Botham Jean case, allowing time to reflect, giving a safe space to grieve, giving hope for a better future, and keeping the memory of Botham Jean alive."

The chance to not only perform, but to give a voice to the *For Bo* story was also impactful to Smith.

"This show has heart, passion and pain, and being a part of something like it was a first for me," said Smith. "I never thought an opportunity like this would arrive—an opportunity to do more than just perform, but to speak out as well." ■

Theatre TCU plans to perform a fully staged production of *For Bo* in February 2021 (as of press time)

For information and tickets, visit theatre.tcu.edu



The local NBC affiliate, KXAS-TV, interviews freshman Nijel Smith, who played Bo Jones in *For Bo* as well as playwright and director Ayvaunn Penn ahead of the play's premiere.

TCU's Fine Arts Gala Moved to 2021

We are excited to announce plans for the next TCU Fine Arts Gala to be held at the new TCU Music Center in December 2021!

The long-awaited TCU Music Center, which houses the Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU, will open on campus this fall. This beautiful building and the state-of-the-art concert hall are an amazing gift for TCU and the city of Fort Worth.

The 2021 TCU Fine Arts Gala will commemorate this incredible gift and celebrate the many talented students pursuing their passions in the College of Fine Arts. It will also be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to honor Fort Worth's legendary Van Cliburn for his immeasurable contributions to classical music.

Funds generated from the biennial Fine Arts Gala support programs that provide art, dance, fashion merchandising, design, music and theatre students many exceptional opportunities to flourish in the classroom and beyond, further enhancing their educational experiences.



Because of past Galas . . .

Art students traveled to museums in Houston and Arkansas

"Those experiences were some of my favorite from my time at TCU. The trips were great experiences to see new cities and art forms, and I am glad that I was able to share that with my classmates.

At the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, we saw two amazing shows by Nari Ward and Will Boone. The work was thought-provoking and timely. Seeing work by contemporary artists is important to know what's going on in the art world and what work and ideas are guiding the main discourse.

I am very thankful to have received generous funding for many educational and inspiring experiences and visits that would otherwise have not been possible." –Alejandra Lopez



Dance students attended summer intensive programs

"In total, I attended nine weeks of summer dance intensives across the country which exposed me to working dancers and choreographers. I expanded my technical and artistic capabilities as well as made connections for future job prospects.

This support allowed me to take a step out of the TCU bubble to gain a greater understanding of where I fit into the dance field. I had an amazing time, and my eyes were opened to my own abilities and the true expansiveness of the work that is within the realm of possibility." –Joe LaLuzerne (far right)



Fashion merchandising students networked with industry experts in New York

"Between meeting with various companies, my group would go over what we learned and took away from the experience. Self-reflection was a huge part of this trip. We would always ask ourselves what we found inspirational and how we can work towards that specific goal.

I'm so thankful for the Fine Arts Gala supporting me in this venture! With your help, I was able to grow in my industry and get an experience I would not have been able to have otherwise." –Jada Rhome (on left)

A TCU choral ensemble performed to new audiences

Funds from the Fine Arts Gala allowed the TCU Concert Chorale to accept the honor of performing for thousands at the Texas Music Educators Association conference in San Antonio, Texas, eliciting feedback such as:

"The concert took everyone in the room on an emotional journey – we were all moved by the intensity of the feeling and the stories that were told."

"I have truly never been prouder to be a Horned Frog than I am tonight. What an incredible performance!"

While we are sad to have to wait another year to celebrate the accomplishments of our students and faculty in the TCU Music Center, it will be worth the wait. ■



Dancing for Good

SCCDance honor society hosts annual benefit concert for AIDS Outreach Center of Tarrant County

DanceTCU, along with several professional dance companies and students from a local performing arts high school, took the Studio Theatre stage in Erma Lowe Hall on a Saturday night in late February for the annual dance concert to benefit the AIDS Outreach Center of Tarrant County (AOC). This beloved special event was the culmination of nearly a year of planning, largely organized by students in the School for Classical & Contemporary Dance's (SCCDance) honor society, Chi Tau Epsilon.

"The evening was extraordinary," said Susan Douglas Roberts, professor of dance and Chi Tau Epsilon faculty advisor. "Each ensemble lived fully in their performance. At the end of the evening, we were all on our feet cheering."

What began as way to honor a member of the SCCDance family has endured as a central mission of Chi Tau Epsilon. Accompanist Lee Fincher lost his battle with HIV/AIDS in 1993. That same year, the then-president of Chi Tau Epsilon, Andrew Parkhurst '93, organized the first dance concert to benefit the AOC in Fincher's memory.

Through the years, the AOC benefit dance concert has evolved from an event showcasing works by TCU students, faculty and guest artists into a can't-miss annual performance featuring the talents of many dance companies.

This year's concert—unexpectedly the SCCDance's last of the 2019-20 academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic— included performances by *DanceTCU*, Dallas Black Dance Theatre's *DBDT: Encore!*, FLOMAR Productions, Jordan Fuchs Company, Texas Ballet Theater and the Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts' Academy Dance Company.

"The concert is such a special tradition because it unites not just TCU, but the wider Texas dance community," said Rose Kotopka '20, the Chi Tau Epsilon director of community engagement, who led the planning of the 2020 event.

Douglas Roberts noted that the longstanding relationship between the SCCDance and AOC has transcended several generations of TCU alumni, AOC staff and clients who see the importance of continuing to raise awareness and funds through the benefit concert. Krista Langford '08, who served as the Chi Tau Epsilon director of community engagement when she was a student, returned to the event this year as the teacher of the Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts dance company.

"It was really cool to meet someone who had been in my place and to talk to audience members who come to the show year after

year," said Kotopka. "It was a reminder of the bigger impact the concert has."

Kotopka and her cohorts began preparing for the 2020 benefit concert in June 2019. The students were responsible for planning the schedule, establishing the budget and inviting the dance companies to participate. Student committees helped with marketing, program creation, dress rehearsals and show week.

"This kind of concert takes an army of dedicated people to put on successfully," said Caroline Woodward, the junior co-director of community engagement. "Chi Tau Epsilon has taught me the importance of time management, creativity and working together as a team."

Kotopka echoed the impact that working on the event had on her personally.

"As a ballet major with an arts leadership and entrepreneurship minor, coordinating this year's concert gave me an opportunity to practice the skills and concepts I've been learning about in my arts management courses, such as communication, logistics and teamwork abilities," said Kotopka. "Seeing all of our hard work and months of planning come together in one beautiful night of dance and awareness was incredibly fulfilling." ■



PHOTO: ALYSSA PETER PHOTOGRAPHY

Choreographed by Elijah Alhadji Gibson, *DanceTCU* performs *Necessitate*, a danced imperative to silence the noise, recognize the distractions, mobilize, resist, then take action.

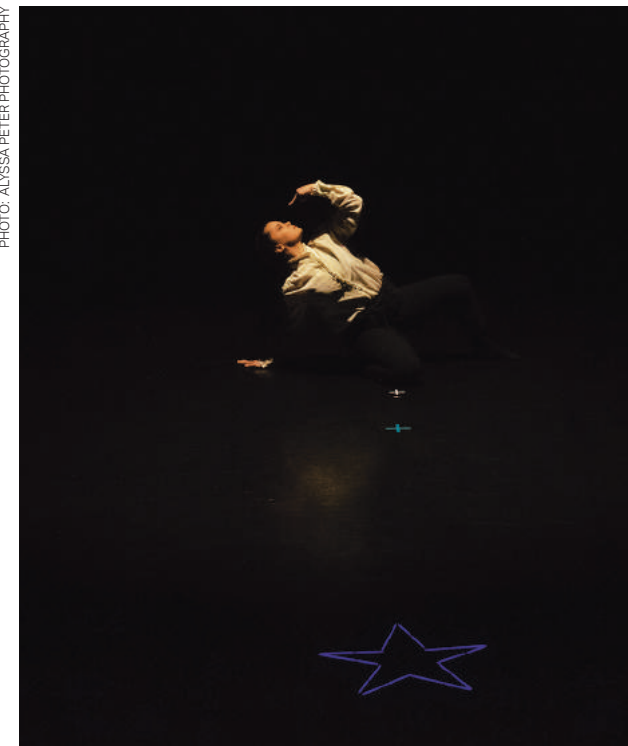


PHOTO: ALYSSA PETER PHOTOGRAPHY

DanceTCU performs sophomore Gabby Cunningham's *Ode to the Gays*, a work that poetically speaks to those who feel afraid to be out, loud and proud.



PHOTO: ALYSSA PETER PHOTOGRAPHY

Choreographed by Heather McKay '20 and performed by *DanceTCU*, *The Spaces Between Us* is a meditation on intimacy and wholeness bred in the broken spaces between humans.

PHOTO: MONCRIEF CANCER INSTITUTE



Visitors enjoy the opening reception of the fall 2019 exhibition, *Efflorescence*—the first solo-curated exhibition of Alexis Meldrum '19 MA.



PHOTO: MONCRIEF CANCER INSTITUTE



PHOTO: LYNNIE BOWMAN CRAVENS

There are many unique considerations about the mediums of art that are displayed in the gallery at Moncrief Cancer Institute due to the compromised immunity of the patients. In *Slow Growth (Bloom)*, 2016, artist Emily Chase uses artificial soil because organic matter is not allowed in the hospital.

Emily Chase's *Like Belladonna Honey*, 2015, hanging in the exhibition, *Efflorescence*. At first glance, Chase's artworks appear to be made from fabric, but closer inspection reveals that they are created from paper.



PHOTO: PAULINA MARTIN

Dario Bucheli '20 MFA and third-year art history student Sarah Webb install *The Art of Performance* at Moncrief Cancer Institute.

Visit theartgalleries.tcu.edu to view the catalogs of past exhibitions at Moncrief Cancer Institute.

The Power of Art

School of Art partnership with Moncrief Cancer Institute celebrates vital connection between art and medicine

The infusion room at Moncrief Cancer Institute off of West Magnolia Avenue on Fort Worth's southside is a place where many patients spend a lot of time—sometimes an entire day at once—receiving chemotherapy. In what is otherwise a sterile space, a hallway inside that infusion room doubles as an art gallery, a hint to the influence art can have on medicine.

The art featured in the gallery rotates two or three times a year, thanks to a partnership that began in 2015 between Moncrief and the TCU School of Art in association with the on-campus exhibition spaces, The Art Galleries at TCU. The unique nature of exhibiting art in a medical setting presents a tremendous learning opportunity for the curators, who are often TCU graduate students or recent alumni.

Moncrief's gallery also has a considerable effect on those who see it the most: the patients. Research has shown that art can benefit hospital patients by distracting them from the discomfort or anxiety of treatments.

"I think it has a really big impact on a patient's state of mind," said Lynné Cravens, manager of The Art Galleries at TCU. "Moncrief staff have said that everyone gets really excited when a new show is coming in because having something different in the space is so invigorating."

Cravens and her colleague, Sara-Jayne Parsons, the director and curator of The Art Galleries at TCU, liaise with Moncrief staff to coordinate gallery programming and serve as mentors to the curators.

Alexis Meldrum '19 MA solo-curated the fall 2019 show, *Efflorescence*, featuring the work of artist Emily Chase.

"With the support of The Art Galleries at TCU, I was very excited about the opportunity to build a show from the ground up," said

Meldrum. "Researching, writing about and organizing the artworks in *Efflorescence* offered a new chance to exercise the tools I had gathered as a student. Having this experience directly after graduating solidified everything I learned and gave me confidence when entering the workforce in the museum world."

Sierra Forester '20 MFA noted she felt a sense of responsibility when curating the fall 2018 show, *Woven Landscapes*, featuring the works of the artist group Tierra Firme.

"As a curator, ... there is the social responsibility to provide a stimulating exhibition for the audience," said Forester. "My job was to highlight local artists who were doing wonderful things with the community and to provide a break in routine for the patients, family and staff at Moncrief."

substituted with an artificial soil because organic matter is not allowed in the hospital. Accessibility is also an important factor; curators must plan the exhibitions to accommodate patients who are seated in wheelchairs or use assistive devices, such as an IV stand, to get around.

The most recent exhibition, *The Art of Performance*, curated from TCU's Permanent Art Collection by a group of art history graduate students, was extended from spring into the summer due to health concerns during the Coronavirus pandemic. The next exhibition is slated to debut this fall. It will be the first solo exhibition for Ashley Stecenko, a third-year student pursuing an MFA in studio art. She will curate a show of her own work, which she hopes will have uplifting themes of spirituality and strength.



A hallway inside the infusion room at Moncrief Cancer Institute doubles as an art gallery.

PHOTO: LYNNIE BOWMAN CRAVENS

I learned a new value of art outside of my own."

There are many unique considerations about the mediums of art that can be displayed in Moncrief's gallery due to the patients' compromised immunity. Originally, one of the pieces created by artist Emily Chase incorporated soil, which had to be

Real-world experiences and community outreach opportunities for students have long been essential elements of a TCU education, and the partnership with Moncrief is just that.

"The mission of the School of Art and The Art Galleries at TCU is to find opportunities for our students to have professional practice, so to be able to provide the chance for them to curate an exhibition in a different kind of venue stands out on a résumé," said Parsons. "And, I think it says something about Moncrief that they generously give this exhibition space for their patients and staff to enjoy." ■

The Art Galleries at TCU is seeking School of Art students and alumni to curate future exhibitions at Moncrief Cancer Institute. Interested parties can email theartgalleries@tcu.edu.



PHOTO: NEIL ANDERSON-HIMMELSPACH

Frog Synthyony is an electronic and electro-acoustic laptop ensemble formed in 2018. The ensemble is the only one of its kind that performed at TMEA in February 2020.

Horned Frogs in Harmony

School of Music represents TCU at world's largest music education conference

The award-winning **TCU Wind Symphony** and **TCU Frog Synthyony**, an electronic and electro-acoustic laptop ensemble, were each invited to perform at the 2020 Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) Clinic and Convention after submitting a showcase proposal a year in advance. Performing at TMEA is a special honor that only a handful of college music ensembles receive each year.

These ensembles and more TCU School of Music students, faculty and staff attended this year's TMEA convention, which is the world's largest annual gathering of music educators. The 2020 TMEA convention—also the organization's centennial celebration—brought more than 30,000 professionals and students to San Antonio, Texas, from around the world for workshops, research exhibitions and performances in February.

Neil Anderson-Himmelspace, Ph.D., the Frog Synthyony faculty advisor and assistant professor of music technology and music theory/composition, said he was thankful when Frog Synthyony's showcase proposal was accepted because TMEA performances are typically centered on more traditional choirs, wind ensembles and small chamber ensembles.

"The music educational world is evolving, and we are seeing music technology being used in classrooms as teaching tools. Why not have an ensemble that makes music electronically [like Frog Synthyony]?" said Anderson-Himmelspace. "I want to help people see that music making with a computer, a MIDI controller and an acoustic instrument can combine together to make a wonderful aural experience unlike anything heard before."

Senior Meghan Scott, a Frog Synthyony ensemble member, said performing at the TMEA convention was a memorable experience.

"My favorite part...was performing an original composition 'In Due Time' in front of a big audience," said Scott. "My experience performing at TMEA with Frog



PHOTO: MEGHAN SCOTT

Senior Meghan Scott and junior Parker Greenwood are two of the seven Frog Synthyony members from the 2019-20 academic year. The ensemble can include anywhere from two to 15 members.

Synthyony was the highlight of my semester. It was literally like jamming out on stage with my best friends."

TCU's award-winning Wind Symphony premiered a composition by alumnus Kevin Day '19 during its TMEA convention performance. Under the direction of Bobby R. Francis, TCU's director of bands, Day's "Pyrotechnics: Concerto for Trumpet" was performed by guest artist Jens Lindemann, one of the world's foremost trumpet soloists.

"This was a unique opportunity for Kevin to have his music performed in front of such a distinguished audience," said Francis. "Jens actually requested Kevin write the piece after hearing [another] piece he had written the previous year."

In addition to the TMEA convention, the TCU Wind Symphony has performed in recent years at the ▶



PHOTO: PAUL CORTESE

Approximately 60 instrumentalists in the TCU Wind Symphony perform under the direction of Bobby R. Francis, TCU director of bands. At TMEA, the ensemble was accompanied by an additional 20 to 25 brass players that played on the opening fanfare.

College Band Directors National Association Conference and the American Bandmasters Association Convention. Playing for the music professionals who attend conferences like these can be a significant and inspiring experience for music students, according to Francis.

"It offers students an opportunity to perform for an audience that consists of mostly music educators who understand quality performances and respond accordingly," said Francis. "The response from these audiences has validated the students' hard work and development as musicians."

Assistant Professor of Voice and Voice Pedagogy James Rodriguez, Ph.D., and doctoral student, Jesse De Hoyos, presented their research project "Range, Tessitura, and Vowel Analysis of the TMEA All-State Choral Audition Music: Tools for Successful Part Time Assignments," which looked at vocal wellness and longevity of young



PHOTO: PAUL CORTESE

performers in genres ranging from choral to classical to musical theatre.

"We collected data that informed us and those at our presentation just how taxing some of this music can be for a young voice," said Rodriguez. "It poses the question of what is the best and most appropriate repertoire for this age group."

This research complements Rodriguez's work through the John Large Vocal Arts Laboratory, where he uses scientific technology to promote vocal wellness among voice students.

Looking ahead to next year, the School of Music will again proudly represent TCU at the TMEA convention as the Jazz Ensemble has been invited to perform at the 2021 event. ■

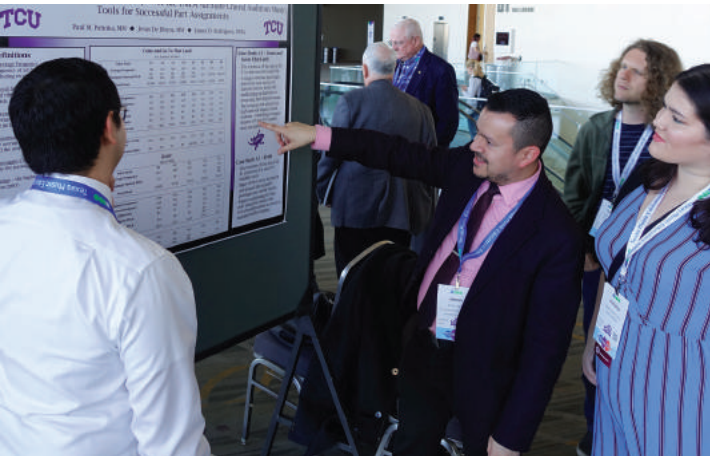


PHOTO: JAMES RODRIGUEZ

Jesse De Hoyos (left), a doctoral student of musical arts, and James Rodriguez, assistant professor of voice and voice pedagogy, study vocal wellness and longevity of young performers in various musical genres. Some of their findings were presented at TMEA in February 2020.

Welcome New Faculty

The College of Fine Arts is proud to welcome these full-time faculty members in the 2020-21 academic year!



Corey Mackey, D.M.A. is the new assistant professor of clarinet. He comes to TCU from his role as assistant professor of clarinet at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and the principal clarinetist of the Dubuque Symphony. An active orchestral musician and soloist, Mackey is also an advocate of new music. He has premiered and/or commissioned new works by Carter Pann, Libby Larsen, Adam Gorb, Jim Stephenson, William Neil and Nathan Daughtrey. He earned a D.M.A. from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, an M.M. from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and a B.M. in music education and performance from Northern Arizona University.

Ayvaunn Penn moves from adjunct faculty member to full-time instructor of theatre. A playwright, director, lyricist and composer, Penn was recently selected as a finalist for the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center National Playwrights Conference for her play *For Bo: A Play Inspired by the Murder of Botham Jean by Officer Amber Guyger*. She earned an M.F.A. in playwriting from Columbia University, a M.A. in speech-theatre with an emphasis in acting & playwriting from Louisiana Tech University, a certificate in method acting from Jubilee Theatre and a B.A. in English from Austin College.



2020-21 College of Fine Arts Events

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and TCU's public health initiative to help protect the health and well-being of our community, the TCU College of Fine Arts will be unable to welcome audiences in-person at any events this fall and until further notice.

These events include performances presented by *DanceTCU*, Theatre TCU and the TCU School of Music as well as exhibitions and events hosted by or at The Art Galleries at TCU (Moudy Gallery and Fort Worth Contemporary Arts).



Many experiences will be available to enjoy online in a virtual or digital format.

Visit finearts.tcu.edu/events for the latest digital and virtual events information.

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 Visit tcu.edu/coronavirus for campus-wide updates.

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allow students to experience the impact of the arts and to share that in the community and abroad.

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