

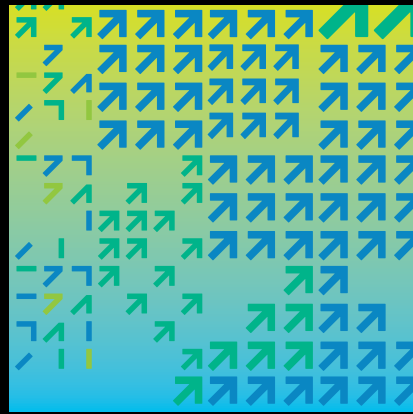


# CONTEXT.™

RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

2022





**6**  
**INDUSTRY  
EXPERIENCE  
AT RINGLING  
COLLEGE**  
  
Students rebrand and  
redefine the Collaboratory.



**12**  
**THE ART  
OF RINGLING  
COLLEGE OF  
ART + DESIGN**  
  
Galleries reopen and  
showcase talents of the  
Ringling community.



**16**  
**RINGLING  
COLLEGE:  
COMMITTED TO  
SUSTAINABILITY**  
  
The campus works together  
towards a greener future.



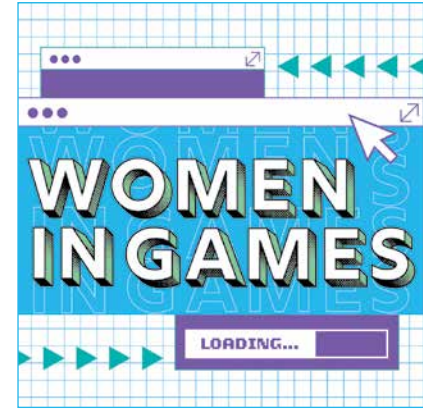
**18**  
**CHANGING  
THE WORLD**  
  
Learn about Ringling College's  
international community and  
the positive impact they're  
making on the world.



**22**  
**FINDING THE  
COURAGE TO  
EMERGE**  
  
Meet our 2021-22  
Trustee Scholars.



**26**  
**DR. JASON  
GOOD**  
  
Ringling College's first  
V.P. of Enrollment  
Management and Marketing.



**28**  
**WOMEN IN  
GAMES**  
  
How colleges can help  
diversify the gaming  
industry.



**32**  
**YOUR SUPPORT  
BRINGS CREATIVITY  
TO LIFE**  
  
Find out how you can support  
emerging artists and designers.



**34**  
**VIRGINIA  
SHEARER**  
  
Curating the next chapter  
of Sarasota Art Museum.



**36**  
**ZERO TO  
SIXTY**  
  
Meet four recent grads  
who kickstarted their  
careers within sixty days  
of graduation.



**40**  
**MAKING AN  
IMPACT**  
  
See how the Center for  
Diversity and Inclusion  
offers crucial support to  
the campus community.



**42**  
**RINGLING  
WINS**  
  
Again and again  
and again...



**44**  
**THE ART OF  
GIVING**  
  
Investing in the future  
of creativity.



**48**  
**ALUMNI NEWS  
AND NOTES**  
  
Keep up with Ringling College  
alumni and friends.

## ON THE COVER

Detail of Lino Tagliapietra, *Nassau*, blown glass, 26.5" x 11.5" x 8.25", 2020,  
courtesy of the Richard and Barbara Basch Collection.

Photo by Elan Photography.



## SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CREATIVE VISIONARIES

For 90 years—yes, 90 YEARS—Ringling College of Art and Design has been dedicated to the pursuit of creative educational excellence and empowering our students and graduates to define what creativity means today and in the future.

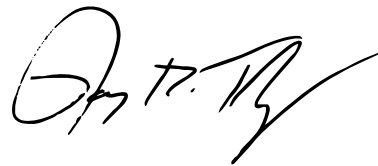
*Turning passion into profession* is our new, catchy tagline. But a tagline is nothing without substance. So, we are backing up those words with tangible actions, outcomes, and student and graduate successes. The last two academic years have been challenging ones, both for educational institutions and the world at large. At Ringling College, we have met those challenges with tenacity and determination, and in the words of this year's group of Trustee Scholars, "have emerged triumphant."

The lead feature in this issue of CONTXT demonstrates a sampling of the ways we are helping our students obtain critical industry experience before they graduate. Through these endeavors, we help them gain employment immediately after, and often before finishing their Ringling education. And, we have made some truly amazing partnerships through the INDEX program, including, for example, Moffitt Cancer Center, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the SRQ Airport. The proof is in the pudding, as they say, and our alumni are everywhere and they are doing amazing things. Writing for *The New York Times*; winning Oscars, Emmys, ADDYs, Golden Globes every year; exhibiting their artwork worldwide; designing, pitching, and creating at top companies; and truly making the world a better place through their creative gifts.

I am overcome with pride and gratitude that in this 2021-22 academic year we welcomed our highest enrollment of all time—nearly 1700 students, 21% of whom hail from over 50 countries worldwide. And, we have made noteworthy progress in our mission to expand our diversity and inclusion, acknowledging that we still have much to learn and to accomplish. In this issue, you will read about some of the recent initiatives spearheaded by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, such as a food and hygiene pantry, as well as the College's efforts to promote a sustainable and green campus.

This is such an exciting time to be part of Ringling College. Each and every year the institution, its students, and graduates are consistently recognized for their outstanding achievements, and many of our programs remain ranked among the top 5 in the country, and the world! Our campus Galleries are finally back open to the public and are bursting with fresh and exciting exhibitions, for everyone to enjoy.

None of this would be possible without all of you who generously support Ringling College. We are so, so grateful for your gifts. I have had the privilege of serving as President of the College for almost 23 years and the evolution and advancements Ringling College has made during this time have been so much more than anyone could have ever imagined. I truly can't wait for the exciting things over the next 90 years as we together continue to help turn our students' creative passions into their professions.



**Larry R. Thompson**  
President, Ringling College of Art and Design



Portrait by Matthew Troyer '22

Turning  
passion into  
profession.





INDEX

Industry Experience at Ringling College

# Real Clients, Real Opportunities

By Rick Dakan

At 6:30 pm on December 16, 2021, Ringling College junior Jude Keifer '23, Creative Writing, pressed the button to launch the video game *ScreamCap* for sale on Steam, the world's premier digital game store. Featuring the art, design, writing, and programming of eleven Ringling College students from six different majors, *ScreamCap* is a game about a team of paranormal investigators who livestream their dives into the unknown to their audience of believers. It's funny, creepy, charming, and decidedly professional.

"Working for INDEX and getting *ScreamCap* ready to launch has been a wild time," Jude told me the night before launch. "One that I'm endlessly thankful for. Coming together with my fellow students and professional game developers to bring this game to life has changed how I operate as a creator for the better."



Illustrations from student-made game *ScreamCap*.

I'd been in the same place Jude had many times before: releasing a game or book to the world, excited and nervous to find out how the audience responds. For the twenty or so years before I started teaching creative writing at Ringling College in 2016, I'd made my living as a writer and game developer. I bring those two decades of industry experience into the classroom, and I teach with an eye towards what it takes to succeed as a professional creator. One of my favorite things about teaching at Ringling College is that the institution, students, and faculty think and deeply care about professional success after graduation. That really appealed to me as a creator and educator, and I know it's something our students appreciate too.

"The opportunities I had through the Collaboratory\* were the ones I went to Ringling College to have," Pablo Murray-Campbell '20, Business of Art and Design, told me. Now an associate producer at Blue Mammoth Games, working on their hit online game, *Brawlhalla*, Pablo got that job right after graduation in large part because of his work as a producer on *ScreamCap*. "I chose Ringling College above other schools because I knew it wasn't just a technical school. It's one of the best art schools because it allows you to gain that professional experience without leaving campus. It's work that genuinely is getting you ready for a career. I know I'm not the only one who has benefitted from these opportunities, and I'm sure I won't be the last."

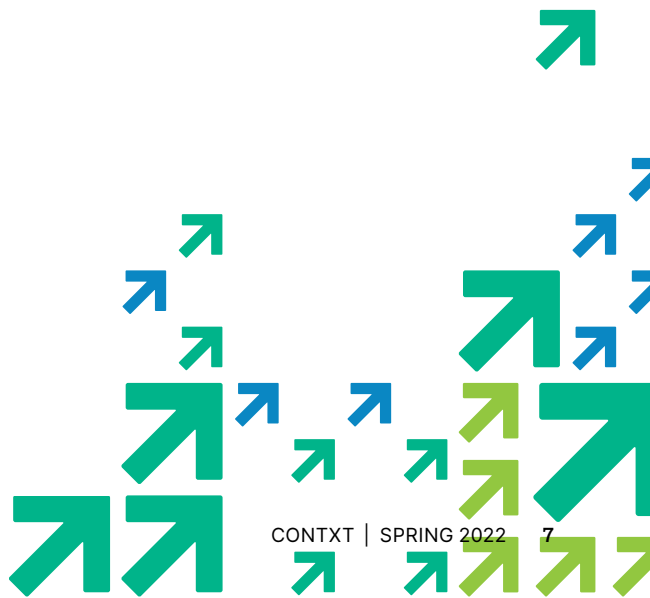
## The Collaboratory

Pablo's and Jude's experience with *ScreamCap* is exactly the reason Ringling College created the Collaboratory in the first place. As President Larry R. Thompson explained to me, "One of the concerns I kept hearing over and over again from students who graduated was: I can't get a job because I don't have experience but I can't get experience because I don't have a job."

This all-too-common graduate dilemma prompted President Thompson to focus on the idea of providing students with opportunities for experiential learning, a relatively new concept for art schools. Thanks to a generous grant and support from The Patterson Foundation in 2012, he was able to do just that through a new program at the College he coined: the Collaboratory. "I came up with the name in the middle of the night. 'Collaboratory,' an educational laboratory where students collaborate across disciplines—where different disciplines can work together regardless of their major," he explained. "I set a goal: I wanted to guarantee that every student would have this opportunity to work on real projects. I wanted the opportunity for every student to show their capabilities, to shine outside the classroom."

When I came to campus and heard about the Collaboratory from my colleagues, I thought it was a great initiative. An old friend and business partner of mine, Michael Lewis, created the Anspar Foundation to fund research into openness and transparency across sectors. He'd been working with researchers at University Cork College in Ireland for years to research topics like open source software, open innovation, and crowdsourcing. I pitched them the idea of working with the Collaboratory to have students create original games, characters, and stories that would be released under an open license to see how they performed in the marketplace. Over the next three years we worked with close to one hundred different students to come up with ideas, designs, and art for five different games. *ScreamCap* is the first of those to be published, with more coming soon.

And our experiences were just a small part of the exciting things going on at the Collaboratory. There were students shaping corporate identities, illustrating wine labels, doing market research, designing food courts, creating virtual reality experiences, and so much more. For the hundreds of students involved, these were great opportunities, but something was still missing from President Thompson's vision of the Collaboratory reaching each and every student at Ringling College.





The Class Project and Pitch

In the fall of 2019, three students had an assignment for their Project Management class with Business of Art and Design professor, Marilyn Garman '12, Business of Art and Design. It was a standard class project, with the same parameters assigned to the whole class. The goal was to produce a new visual identity and branding for the College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), that was created to strengthen the professional development of Ringling's students with meaningful "real world" learning experiences. The Collaboratory was one part of the larger QEP initiative.

Tekla Khantadze '22, Business of Art and Design, Luna Križan '22, Film, and Sophie Schönbach '22, Business of Art and Design, realized that in order to help the QEP reach students more effectively, they needed to dig down and find out what students already knew, and, what they didn't know about the Collaboratory. They conducted in-person interviews with fifteen students from all majors and years, and sent out a survey questionnaire to the whole student body that received close to 700 responses (almost 50% of the school at that time).

What their research found was that many students did not completely understand the Collaboratory – where it was or how to get involved. "The research definitely informed us and told us everything we needed to know," Tekla told me. "But being students ourselves, we were also affected by this problem. We had a hunch of how we could improve and we knew simply creating a new logo wouldn't work. We needed the opinions of the student body to support that."

Their recommendation was a complete overhaul of the structure of how the Collaboratory, QEP, and professional opportunities work at Ringling College. They suggested the creation of a new umbrella brand that would oversee and organize all of the industry experience opportunities on campus.

Word soon spread from the classroom to the upper levels of the administration. There was a lot of excitement about their ideas, and soon what had started as a class assignment became a huge project to turn their pitch into a reality. Working with Associate Vice President and Dean of Undergraduate Studies Jeff Schwartz and Business of Art and Design Department Head Kathleen Sobr among others, Tekla, Luna, and Sophie worked *within* the Collaboratory to *reshape and redefine* the Collaboratory. Working through COVID lockdowns, with all three of the students returning to their homes overseas and coordinating via Zoom, they refined and expanded their concept and readied their pitch.



Students Sophie Schönbach, Luna Križan, and Tekla Khantadze lead conversations about the redesign.

"We did numerous practice pitches in the auditorium with numerous practice audiences," Sophie recounts. "We had negotiation practice questions. Jeff Schwartz came in to play the devil's advocate and ripped the pitch apart. Kathleen Sobr and Kendall Brugger, too. And then when we made the actual pitch, Dr. Thompson was quiet the whole time! We finished, and he was just quiet for a while. The auditorium was full of people, and everyone was quiet. Then he asked a few follow-up questions."

"They really gave a great, great presentation," President Thompson recalls. "They mentioned all the difficulties and the problems, and the need to rebrand and make people aware of the opportunities. So I listened to it, and my senior officers listened to it, and I think everyone was scared to death to tell me about it. I would always say in my speeches that that's the great thing about being president of an art school: I can make up words and no one cares. I really didn't want to give this word Collaboratory up, but I'm someone who believes strongly in creativity and new ideas. I need to walk the talk. So I listened, and I spent probably three weeks thinking about it. And finally, I told them I was all in," he said.

"The Collaboratory ate the Collaboratory," President Thompson told me with a proud smile. "That's what happened. That's how it all came about. It took a student-driven, professional collaboration to identify the issues and completely rejuvenate the entire concept."

INDEX

Along with the new structure and organization came a new brand: INDEX, which is short for Industry Experience at Ringling College. "It's an index of opportunities, of all professional experiences you can find on campus," Tekla says. "It's an identity, a way to talk about Industry Experiences, understand them, and communicate about them."

Kendall Brugger came to Ringling College in August 2020, right in the middle of all this change. Former Brand Director for Plank Industries, Kendall left the private sector to join academics as a Business of Art and Design faculty member and as the new director of the Collaboratory. "What drew me was having this platform for students to engage in professional development. Meeting with clients, taking feedback, and exposing students to all these client-led experiences. This is the competitive advantage. This is the edge that Ringling College can really sink its teeth into—another way we are helping to turn students' passions into professions."

INDEX officially launched in August, 2021. "It's designed to be a centralized point of entry connecting students with all the different industry experience opportunities on campus," Kendall explains. "We want the program to enhance the quality of learning at Ringling College by providing professional experiences that allow students to build their portfolios, strengthen their resumes, and acquire confidence and familiarity with industry best practices."

INDEX is living into its role as an integral part of every Ringling College education, having impacted more than 2,300 students across every major. Ringling students have worked with close to 200 unique professional bodies ranging from nationally and internationally acclaimed clients such as the Smithsonian American Art Museum and Moffitt Cancer Center to innovative start-ups and independent brands. It truly has become the third pillar of the overarching Ringling College experience: world-class academics, a robust and well-rounded student life, and INDEX.

“Creative confidence is forged in the crucible of deadlines, demands, and deliverables—the foundation of INDEX,” President Thompson explained to me. “We have solved the dilemma by preparing industry-ready graduates equipped with clear and demonstrated professional experience, and the evidence is clear in the indisputable success of our alumni.”



Development of the new name and branding for experiential learning opportunities at Ringling College.



The INDEX logo was created by Adam Myerscough '22, Graphic Design.

\*Ringling College and The Patterson Foundation partnered in 2012 with the shared goal to strengthen the creative workforce of tomorrow. INDEX continues the legacy of this partnership by aggregating the myriad experiential education opportunities the College has long offered.



The creativity keeps flowing.

INDEX opportunities are abundant and available through experiential learning in the classroom, the Design Center, Studio Labs, ART Network, the Makerspace, as client competitions and immersive experiences, volunteerism, internships, and elective courses.

Some of our INDEX clients include...

- Art Ovation Hotel

Baltimore Orioles

Biolife

Center for Building Hope

CGC Comics

Cirque du Soleil

C. G. Jung Society of Sarasota

Feld Entertainment

Field Club

Flight School

General Motors

Goodwill Industries

IMG Academy

International Diplomatic Corps of Florida

Jewish Family and Children's Services of the Suncoast

L'Oreal

Modern Pentathlon
- Moffitt Cancer Center

Newtown Alive

Patriot Plaza

Porter Family Vineyards

Sarasota Bradenton International Airport

Sarasota Film Festival

Sarasota Opera

Sarasota Police Department

Smithsonian American Art Museum

Suncoast Blood Bank

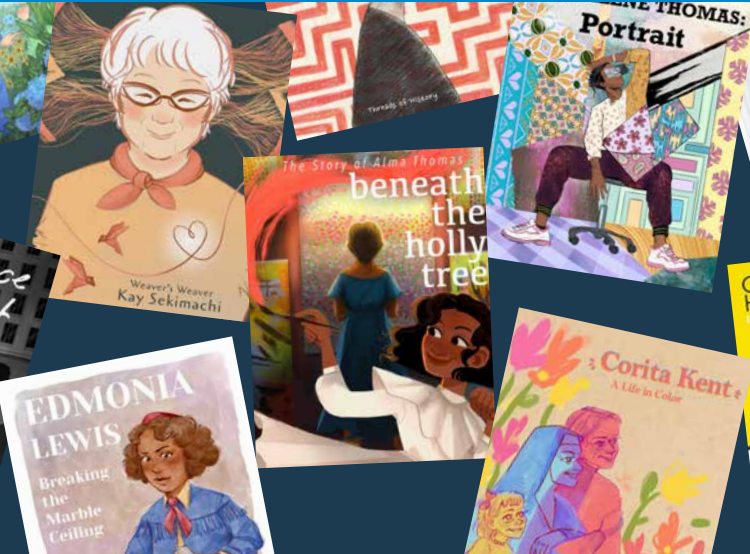
The Ringling Museum

The Sarasota African American Cultural Coalition

Vel

Voalte

Drawn to Art: Ten Tales of Inspiring Women Artists Comic Series



CLIENT  
Smithsonian American Art Museum

SOLUTION  
10 Illustration students created a series of biographical sketches for the Smithsonian American Art Museum based upon the lives of ten women artists whose work is featured in the Museum's collection. Working closely with the client team, the students completed client deliverables as short comics composed of 12 to 16 frames to convey the story of the ten women artists. Each winning student received a \$1,000 award and the honor of having their work featured in the renowned Museum's special project.

Wet Dog Corp. Virtual Reality Game



CLIENT  
Flight School

SOLUTION  
38 students across four majors came together to produce a brand activation launch of Wet Dog Corp. at South by Southwest, (SXSW) the infamous conference and festival that celebrates the convergence of tech, film, music, education, and culture. The virtual reality game project required the collaboration of multiple creative disciplines to brainstorm and ideate, create an entire graphics package, build a physical arcade game, and manage the production details of the event.

VR Enhanced Patient Care with Moffitt Cancer Center



CLIENT  
Moffitt Cancer Center

SOLUTION  
Virtual Reality Development (VRD) students and the acclaimed Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa teamed up in 2019 to develop creative content for digital healthcare technologies, including virtual reality (VR), animations for patient education, and training videos for physicians. Patients receiving radiation treatments, for example, are now able to immerse themselves in a VR experience to better understand and prepare for their treatment. VRD senior, Joseph Janssen continues to work with the Moffitt team on a VR training module, using gamification to help relieve stress and anxiety experienced by patients and their families.

Patriot Plaza Virtual Tour



CLIENT  
The Patterson Foundation

SOLUTION  
12 students from the Branded Entertainment and Narrative Film tracks directed, produced, and edited an experiential video series of Patriot Plaza, the 295-acre National Cemetery located near Sarasota with a 2,800-seat ceremonial amphitheater. When the pandemic put a halt to onsite class trips in 2020, The Patterson Foundation engaged INDEX to assemble a student-led production team. The final client deliverable, eleven cinematic films, bring the civics lessons of military service and sacrifice conveyed through the art and architecture of Patriot Plaza to educators, classrooms, and people nationwide.

Wine Label Design



CLIENT  
Porter Family Vineyard

SOLUTION  
The eighth in a series of unique labels designed annually by a Ringling College student, Porter Family Vineyards—a premium Napa Valley Vineyard—engaged students again to design a wine bottle label for their Barre Azure vintage. Kicking off the process with a client meeting, students were provided a creative brief to inspire their ideation and design concepts with historical details, brand narrative, and creative objectives. The winning student received a \$1,500 award, artistic credit on the wine label, and having their work on a product for sale to customers, restaurants, and high-end specialty wine shops.

MiSuits



CLIENT  
Eisenberg International

SOLUTION  
17 students across four majors spent 15 weeks rebranding Eisenberg International's company and reformatting the entire user experience for a new customer journey that more closely represented the brand's unique market positioning. The end result? A new name, new website, marketing materials, compelling imagery, seasonal lookbook, and a very delighted client.





**Left, top to bottom:**  
Richard Mayhew:  
*Transcendence* on display at  
the Lois and David Stulberg  
Gallery.

Student-based exhibition  
*ILLeSt of ILL*, a juried  
collection of work by  
Illustration students.

Glass art on display from  
the collection of Richard and  
Barbara Basch.

**Right:**  
Galleries Operations Manager,  
Valerie Strenk and  
Director and Chief Curator,  
Tim Jaeger.



# THE ART OF RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART + DESIGN

By Valerie Strenk

**Set amongst a backdrop of oaks and palms, the Ringling College of Art and Design campus is beautifully landscaped, highly residential, and very walkable. Unlike many of its art school contemporaries, which are often located in high-density, urban settings, walking Ringling's campus is like a breath of fresh air.**

Along that walk, on the nearly 50-acre campus, visitors and students will come across no less than eight unique gallery spaces teeming with inspiring artwork created by alumni, current students, current and retired faculty, staff, and guest artists; always free of charge and open to the public. Some of the galleries are more tucked away, in our Alfred R. Goldstein Library for example, or are more publicly displayed such as the Madeby Gallery, where Ringling students and alumni can display and sell their work. Of these spaces, six of them are managed by the College's Galleries and Exhibitions Department: a newly formed team including Galleries Operations Manager, Valerie Strenk, almost two dozen student gallery employees, and a talented group of art preparators, led by the Director and Chief Curator, Tim Jaeger.

Tim Jaeger has really come full circle at Ringling College. A 2002 Ringling graduate and Trustee Scholar, and a successful independent artist in his spare time, Tim found his way back on to Ringling's campus in 2008 to serve as Gallery Assistant in the Selby Gallery. Fast-forward ten years and both the campus and gallery spaces were rapidly expanding. This created the need for a Chief Curator and a team. In 2019, Tim was hired to take on the leadership role, creating a dynamic, educational, and meaningful exhibition program for the College and local community to enjoy.

"Not being able to welcome our students and community into the on-campus galleries during the pandemic felt like being an actor performing to an empty house," Tim said. "Now that we've moved on, it feels so good to share our exhibitions, programs, and openings. More than anything I'm so grateful for the interaction and in-person collaborations we've been able to reestablish with our students."

The small but mighty Galleries Department has a rolling program and averages about 24 exhibitions that are thoughtfully curated and installed throughout the academic year. The Lois and David Stulberg Gallery is the largest of the campus galleries and exhibits high-caliber, contemporary and modern artists; a magnificent range of creatives representing art in diverse mediums. Two galleries are located within the Keating Center: The Patricia Thompson Alumni Gallery and The Skylight Gallery. These spaces host exhibitions featuring the work of Ringling College's alumni, spanning several decades' worth of graduates.

The Richard and Barbara Basch Gallery is located in the Larry R. Thompson Academic Center. This gallery exhibits artwork by newly retired faculty in the fall and each spring hosts a selection of one-of-a-kind pieces from the incredible glass collection of Dr. and Mrs. Basch. The glass exhibition attracts a large number of visitors every year and is something that the community looks forward to each spring.

The Willis Smith Construction Inc. Gallery, also located in the Larry R. Thompson Academic Center, highlights student work based on exhibition proposals that students submit for consideration. Once a proposal has been accepted, the students then work closely with the Gallery staff to coordinate, plan out, and assist in installation. Examples of these are two annual student-based exhibitions: *ILLeSt of ILL*, an exhibition featuring work from all four years of the Illustration Department, and *Ligature*, a print and graphics exhibition created by the College's Type Club. It's an important part of the Galleries' mission to invite and encourage students to learn about the whole process of creating and curating an exhibition. The students participate in the entire process, from start to finish, from how to select paint colors for the gallery walls to designing wall vinyl to marketing their show. All the students are so eager to be included, making it an enriching, unique experience with each group.

Once the spring exhibitions close, it's with incredible speed that the galleries are once again transformed for the annual *Best of Ringling* juried exhibitions, followed by the annual *Senior Thesis* shows.







**Left:** Local art enthusiasts enjoying the Art Walk reception for the exhibition *Spectrum*.

**Right, Top:** Fine Arts Senior Thesis exhibition at the Crossley Gallery.

**Right, Bottom:** Selection of glass art from the glass collection of Richard and Barbara Basch.

African American identity, jazz music, and abstract expressionism. "Landscape has no space, no identity," he once said.

In years past, these exhibitions and others would have attracted hundreds of people, with bustling opening receptions and campus-wide events. Instead, they provided quiet, contemplative spaces; a gentle way to bring people back together after being separated for so long.

**It became an exhibition season focused on reflection, friendships, and a sense of hopeful relief that things were getting back to normal.**

The galleries of Ringling College have always served as the epicenter for showcasing talent and creativity. The goal is to create a multi-faceted experience; a space in which the viewers are introduced to the exhibition through informational text, television monitors looping with interviews and stories, and gallery attendants there to answer questions. A large amount of time is spent planning the space before an exhibition comes to life. This consists of everything from wall color selections and conversations with the exhibiting artists, to the planning and coordination of efforts leading up to the opening reception. Both Tim and Valerie pride themselves on creating experiential spaces for visitors that are unique for each exhibition; spaces that are thoughtfully curated and designed around the art itself.

Today the campus' galleries are flourishing with a bold collection of exhibitions lined up for the future. Some of the recent exhibitions include *Pow! The Comic Art of Mike Zeck from the Costas Collection*, a must-see for any and all Marvel fans; *Parallel Visions: The Paintings of Tom and Peggy Root*, both Ringling College alumni; The Willis Smith Gallery in the Academic Center is getting ready to open the annual *Ligature* exhibition; and The Richard and Barbara Basch Gallery is once again filled with their annual glass exhibition, featuring hand-selected pieces from their personal glass collection including works by glass art legends Dale Chihuly, Lino Tagliapietra, and many others. And, in downtown Sarasota at the College's boutique gallery space, Project Space 340 (PS340), Ringling College alumni and faculty member Regan Dunnick will exhibit the counterpart to his previous exhibition, *Plum Bob's Ulysses Pt. 2*.

**The message the Galleries and Exhibitions Department wants to project is the importance of celebrating and showcasing what we already have: a community of amazing artists and creatives.**

The Galleries are here to show the students and the community at-large what great things our alumni have accomplished, the extraordinary talents of our current students, the often-hidden talents among our staff, and the incredible artwork being created by our faculty members. The hope is for all the prospective students and their families who tour the campus to see all of this wonderful work and be exposed to what the College has to offer.

"Now that Ringling College also has the Sarasota Art Museum, its contemporary museum space, the Galleries Department has been able to shift slightly inward. What I mean by this is that 90% of what we put on view is now Ringling College-sourced," explained Tim.

"As Director and Curator, part of my excitement is reconnecting with alumni, sharing their work with our community, and listening to their Ringling stories. At the same time, it gives me great joy to collaborate with our students through the Galleries program. We provide the behind-the-scenes instruction and collaboration that allow our students to learn everything from curation and exhibition design to marketing and promotion of exhibitions and events. We don't just help students create great exhibitions; we use exhibitions to help make great students."

**"We look forward, as a team and in partnership with our Ringling community and Sarasota partners, to continue providing exceptional, experimental, and educational programming for many years to come."**



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Ringling College  
of Art + Design

For more information on everything related to the Galleries and Exhibitions Department, please visit their website at: [www.ringlingcollege.gallery](http://www.ringlingcollege.gallery)



## RINGLING COLLEGE:

# Committed to Sustainability

By Ryan G. Van Cleave | Illustration by DeAnna Boyer '22

From installing EV charging stations on campus to reducing our overall carbon footprint to increasing the efficacy of existing solar panels on campus, Ringling College of Art and Design is steadily moving toward a green and sustainable future. Andreas Wolfram, Ringling College's energy and sustainability manager, says that growing up in Europe, he saw the devastating environmental impact of an overreliance on fossil fuels, firsthand. "Sustainability matters because it has an impact on us now as well as future generations," he explains. "I want to make sure that my daughter has the same opportunities I had."

When Wolfram came to Ringling College in April 2021 after decades of work for Michelin and various energy companies, he quickly realized that there wasn't yet a clear culture of sustainability and energy management. "Without capturing data, you don't know where your problems are, nor what opportunities exist to make things better. It all starts with having good data." So, he's working hard to generate that necessary baseline data so he can begin to coordinate efforts for improvement, such as getting all the existing solar panels onto a single dashboard to clearly determine what they're contributing to the campus' power needs. His hope is to eventually make this data available online so anyone in the campus community can have 24/7 access to up-to-date information.

One of his best partners is the Green Ambassadors club, a student-led organization that's focused on campus-wide environmental awareness. They advocate for healthier and greener living for students and create spaces for community members to explore how art and design can build a more sustainable world. In the past, they've planned campus-wide events such as ReFest 2020, a month-long event series inviting students to rethink their roles as creative professionals in a time of climate crisis.

Mafer Bencomo Arevalo '23, Visual Studies, the club's vice president, explains that they've also "offered a swap shop, various workshops on repurposing items, and created a typeface installation with recycled materials. We also host small events for club members, such as documentary screenings or book clubs." This year, they're creating an eco-friendly printed zine that will compile sustainability-themed work made by Ringling students. Additionally, club members are reading the book *Small is Beautiful* and meeting monthly to share their reflections.

**It's not just students who are interested in the College becoming more sustainable, though. It's faculty and staff, too, who are stepping up and speaking out. "They're requesting changes. The passion is there within our campus community," Wolfram notes. "This is positive. Very positive."**

While Wolfram's eager to see how the new car-charging stations in the parking lot off U.S. 41 will be used, he's even more excited about the plans for the under-construction dining hall, Cunniffe Commons, which includes the use of a new ORCA machine. The company's fancy way of explaining what an ORCA machine does is that "it creates the perfect thermophilic biological environment for the microorganisms to digest food waste into a liquid." The easier way of saying it is this—it works just like a human stomach. ORCA technology mimics a natural digestion process, using the same principles that living organisms are governed by. Air, water, and microbiology turn food waste into an environmentally safe liquid that goes down the drain using our existing sewer infrastructure.

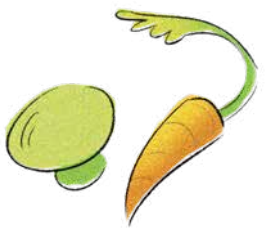
Since the ORCA's end product goes down a drain, that means the traditional truck and bin waste collection system can become obsolete. The fewer trucks needed on campus, the fewer harmful emissions will be spewed into our air. We won't be dumping tons of food waste into local landfills which would otherwise create carbon dioxide and methane gas emissions, and the liquid itself can be used to create renewable, sustainable energy at the wastewater treatment plant. The cost savings, too, will be significant. ORCA claims that their machines will pay for themselves within three years.

In the arena of sustainability, the College has had prior success—especially in terms of the construction of new buildings. For example, the Larry R. Thompson Academic Center and Ann and Alfred Goldstein Hall are both gold LEED certified, a rating which marks the quality and achievement in green building. Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, LEED certification requires independent verification of green features to rate the design, construction, operations, and maintenance of resource-efficient, high-performing, healthy, cost-effective buildings. LEED also measures vital things such as air and water quality, too.

A silver LEED certification has been given to the Alfred R. Goldstein Library, the Richard and Barbara Basch Visual Arts Center, and Greensboro Hall, while the new Bridge Apartments are LEED certified. Every major new building on campus has the goal of earning some level of LEED certification, as well, since everyone benefits from sustainable design, construction, operation, and performance.

Taken together, these and other efforts in sustainability led to Ringling College being recognized in 2017 by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education as a STARS Bronze Institution based on its reported accomplishments in campus sustainability. Wolfram hopes that a silver and eventually a gold rating is in our future. "In the past, we didn't have the right people or groups in place to help take our passion for sustainability to the next level," Wolfram says. "Honestly, I'm surprised at how far behind American thinking about sustainability and energy use is from European thinking—we're talking generations. But I'm now meeting with the Sustainability Committee, which includes the senior officers. This gives me the opportunity to address issues and offer solutions so we can have procedures in place for the future, which is a great step forward."

Wolfram adds, "If we want to be a pre-eminent art and design college, we need to be pre-eminent with sustainability, too. We should do everything possible. It'll save us money along the way, but more importantly, it's simply the right thing to do for everyone living today and for every generation to come."







International students proudly display their country's flags on the steps of the Alfred R. Goldstein Library.

## CHANGING THE WORLD:

# International Students and Their Global Impact

By Andrea Saravia Pérez '22, Creative Writing

The global pandemic was in fact that—global. It rocked everyone's world in March of 2020 and has had residual, lasting effects particularly on the international community. In the summer of 2020, I found myself included in that group of those affected. A complex situation was unfolding, fast, and there was no guidebook. The future of any international student attending college in the U.S. by way of an F-1 visa was suddenly, and completely unknown at the time.

For me, words and terms such as I-20 and F-1—terms which had been part of my daily vocabulary since 2018—were of a different language to my domestic friends, those who did not require a visa to study in the United States. Luckily, at Ringling College, I never felt alone in my concerns. This was especially true this past academic year, as the College confirmed its highest number of international students—a whopping 21%—in its history.

So, you may be wondering, how did we all find our way to Ringling College from over fifty different countries? The answers are just as diverse as the students and the places they traveled from. Some say they learned about Ringling through the PreCollege program, and if they were able to attend, they were hooked. A few cited the traditional "Google Search." But for so many, it all started with Ringling's Office of Admissions. Traveling around the country and the world, Ringling College's Admissions Counselors are at the heart of the school's recruitment efforts. And no one gets to experience the (lack of) luxuries of work-related travel more than Kimberly White, assistant dean for International Admissions.

"It's true, I get the opportunity to combine my favorite things," says Kimberly, "I get to travel the world, and help talented and deserving students come to study at Ringling College and discuss leading art and design education." In her six years on Ringling's Admissions team, Kimberly has been to 20 countries and helped recruit thousands of international students. "I am working with international students and schools across the world living in all different time zones, so for example, when it is night here, I am speaking with them over Zoom or doing a virtual event such as a portfolio day or presentation because it's the next day where they live," she says. "But I love it, it's truly so rewarding and being an international expat myself (I am from England) and from personal experience living and working in other countries and now America, I understand the challenges but also the richness to be gained from experiencing other cultures and the importance of having a global mindset."

Since the pandemic brought with it international travel limitations, Kimberly has broadened the outreach through hundreds of virtual events spanning the globe. "Being able to expand and reach further to even more countries we could not otherwise travel to, or audiences that may not have had the opportunity to meet with us before, is so exciting. It will be part of my permanent toolbox in a hybrid fashion to supplement physical travel and connect further," she says.

Another crucial link in the international recruitment chain is Seongwoo Nam. Seongwoo grew up in South Korea and came to study, and then teach in the United States and has been with Ringling College for nearly 22 years. He is a former professor of Ringling's Interior Design program and currently a full-time faculty of the Entertainment Design department. He assists with international recruitment across Asian countries, including China and South Korea.

"The key to connecting with international students is to have a deep understanding of the culture of another country [their country] and apply that understanding appropriately," Seongwoo explains. "In order to properly convey Ringling College's commitment to student education and our culture of 'togetherness' to international students and their parents, communicating in a way that reflects their personal culture is essential. The reason I am able to communicate effectively and connect with Asian students and their families is because I am an educator who deeply understands their cultures. And, of course, because of my pride in our College."

Upon their arrival to campus, most international students find themselves experiencing culture shock, to varying degrees. Even with the help and assurances from Kimberly, Seongwoo, and other counselors, moving to another country is always jarring and unsettling. Cue Amy Pettingill and International Student Affairs. Amy, the office's director, works closely with international students from the day they arrive in the U.S. (and often, even before that!), to the middle of their college career when they are navigating internships, and finally to graduation day and beyond.

In addition to working with Amy, Ringling's international population also has access to many other other programs, resources, and opportunities to socialize with their international peers. The Student Learning Center, an entity that offers remote and in-person appointments tailored towards students' needs, also provides conversational English support to those who are not native speakers. These conversational consultations help teach the students a more in-depth understanding of the language, so they can communicate more easily with their contemporaries. Writing Studio classes are another resource which focus on enhancing the students' reading and writing proficiencies.

A common misconception, in my opinion, is that hailing from different countries and speaking different languages can be an obstacle in creating a united community. I have always felt that our differences make us stronger, together.



An important facet of Ringling's commitment to diversity and global engagement is its participation in the United World Colleges (UWC) network. UWC has a rich history, dating back to 1962 when educational pioneer and UWC Founder Kurt Hahn opened the UWC Atlantic in Wales, U.K. and admitted their first student class. It was the world's first international, two-year Sixth Form College for teenagers aged 16 to 19. Today, the UWC network is made up of 18 schools and colleges on four continents where UWC students study an International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) in locations such as Maastricht, The Netherlands, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Duino, Italy, Costa Rica, China, and America to name a few.

As described by Ringling College student and UWC alumni, Mafer Bencomo Arevalo '23, Visual Studies, "UWC is a network of international schools where students have to leave their country of birth and travel to a different country upon enrollment. Students are placed among, and encouraged to interact with their peers, who come from all over," she said.

"The idea, in essence, is: to bring people together from all parts of the world, different social, economic, and religious backgrounds, so that they may learn from one another both in an academic manner and an extracurricular manner," Mafer explained. In Mafer's case, she was born and raised in Venezuela but had the opportunity to study at UWC Japan. Mafer recalls that she was encouraged to get to know her peers from other countries. In addition to that, she cites that she still lives the values of UWC of "resilience, adaptability, value of diversity, and critical thinking."

**When I spoke with other UWC alumni who are now currently studying at Ringling College, it became clear that the values promoted by the UWC and international community stay with them, throughout their studies and as they go on to develop professionally in their respective industries.**

Jude Zawaideh '23, Business of Art and Design, for example, always makes an effort to include aspects of her personal culture into her professional projects. Dividing her time between Amman and Florida, Jude established and now runs Glahmur, which according to her Instagram is a "wearable art brand that aims to create unique pieces while giving back to the local community in style," and is helping to transform the lives of children in her home country of Jordan. A portion of the brand's proceeds are donated to the local Badwa Center for Special Education in Jordan. Jude states, "A lot of what I do, I want my proceeds to go to a good cause, because I want to build a sense of community through my art. The Badwa Center's mission is to invest and support the abilities of disabled students with the aim of building self-reliance." Woven throughout her designs, her culture's depiction of the evil eye serves as a symbol of protection. Jude, in turn, is using her creativity and connections to help protect a community so close to her heart.

Currently at Ringling College there are 44 UWC Davis Scholars in attendance, most of whom would not be able to attend without the Shelby Davis Scholarship program which promotes diversity in academia, worldwide through the UWC. In January of 2022, United World Colleges was officially nominated for the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize.

The Davis Projects for Peace initiative was created by Kathryn W. Davis, an accomplished internationalist and philanthropist. Upon the occasion of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in February of 2007, Mrs. Davis, the mother of Shelby Davis who funds the Davis UWC Scholars Program, chose to celebrate by committing \$1 million for one hundred Projects for Peace. On funding these projects, she said, "I want to use my 100<sup>th</sup> birthday to help young people launch some immediate initiatives—things that they can do during the summer of 2007—that will bring new thinking to the prospects of peace in the world."



**Fast forward to May 2019, and it was current Ringling College student and UWC alumni, Melvin Gomez '22, Fine Arts, along with fellow Ringling student Michaela (Mica) Borovinsky '22, Illustration, and classmate Jose Ginnocchio both of whom are from Argentina, who proposed a Project for Peace. Their effort was designed to help address the root cause of the migration crisis in Melvin's home country of El Salvador. The plan was to use art as a way for children to escape gang violence and find refuge.**

In their project proposal, the team cited social isolation as a big reason why kids as young as 13 join gangs. "We believe that through art, safe and decent opportunities can be created away from gang violence, preventing younger generations from becoming part of this terrible social issue," they wrote.

Their project was accepted and the team traveled to El Salvador to help establish their "Sculpting for Peace" initiative. According to the official website featuring the Projects for Peace, "The team created a pottery studio at two schools, in an urban area and at a rural school. They also led clay workshops and one called "Painting for Peace"—creating a safe space for the students to process the trauma they have experienced." Painting for Peace, or Pinceladas de Esperanza, is an ongoing project that continues to help children experiencing trauma from the ongoing conflict in El Salvador.



Melvin Gomez '22, Fine Arts, working with children in El Salvador.

Image courtesy of the Fundación Miguel Ángel Ramírez

Two other international students are taking their own cultural experiences and working together on a project closer to "home" in Sarasota. Luna Križan '22, Film, and Sophie Schönbach '22, Business of Art and Design are used to collaborating, having previously worked together on the INDEX branding project with fellow international student, Tekla Khantadze '22, Business of Art and Design.

"We are currently collaborating with Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT), the local public transportation system, to rebrand and to reposition what mobility looks like in the Sarasota community," Sophie states. She added that their connection with their new client began inside the classroom at Ringling College, as part of an INDEX initiative. One of the many factors that allowed the pair to work together so well, was that of having known each other before undertaking the project and sharing similar experiences as international students. Both Luna and Sophie agreed that these shared cultural experiences added to the synergy of their team, with Luna adding that, "On top of me being Croatian and that influencing how I work, and Sophie being German and how she works, there is also that aspect of us both understanding how to experience and cope well with change."

"Changing from one environment to the other, one country to another, we have had that shared experience of moving and having to integrate into a different culture. There are certain skills that come from just... *moving*," she says.

So what comes after Ringling College? For many international students, life after graduation can seem daunting at first—Can I stay in the U.S.? How will I work? Do I have to move again? But thanks to the Office for International Student Affairs, students receive various materials and support explaining their options for next steps which can often include an extension of their visa by way of OPT: Optional Practical Training. This allows students to use their pre-existing F-1 visa and work for an additional year after graduation. Armed with their Ringling education, INDEX experiences, professional portfolios, and a drive to succeed, Ringling's international graduates have an undeniable track record of going on to accomplish great things here in the U.S. and abroad. Some of the major companies now benefiting from these incredible graduates include *National Geographic*, Microsoft, Pixar, and *The New York Times*.

**"It is amazing to meet and work with students from across the globe and then see their success on our campus and beyond," Kimberly told me. "The enrichment of diversity they bring to our campus, the cultural exchange, and the brilliant things they achieve here through realizing their creative pursuits is outstanding."**

Ringling College's international population, both current students and alumni, embody resilience, emotional intelligence, sensitivity, and the empathy needed to bring about change on a global scale.



FINDING THE COURAGE  
TO EMERGE AS A

# 2021-2022 TRUSTEE SCHOLAR

WRITING BY CREATIVE WRITING TRUSTEE SCHOLAR  
**KAILEIA (KYKYE) SUVANNAMACCHA '22**

ARTWORK BY GRAPHIC DESIGN TRUSTEE SCHOLAR  
**ADAM MYERSCOUGH '22**

"Each year, the Trustee Scholars themselves are asked to consider words, themes, ideas that describe them, their aesthetic, and their personality as a class," said Ringling College President Dr. Larry R. Thompson at the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Trustee Scholar Awards ceremony. "After considering these ideas and reflecting on the unique circumstances that this particular class has faced, one word kept coming to mind: Emerge."

One emerges by stepping into their truth. Mustering, then mastering the courage to be seen in that vulnerable space of authenticity.

The formal dinner took place in Soundstage A at the Ringling College Studio Labs on October 29<sup>th</sup>, where all of the Scholars and Nominees were able to celebrate in-person with a select number of honorary guests. Board of Trustees Vice Chair Michael Klein opened the program and the speech portion of the hybrid event was live-streamed for loved ones, faculty members, College trustees, and other supporters to view remotely.

Heart pounding, voice shaking, I could feel my throat closing up as I entered the room. I gazed into a crowd of evening gowns and suit jackets, as the pressure continued to build inside me.

But they were just costumes. We were all humans playing dress up for the night and these were the characters we each chose to show up as. I showed up barefoot, a signature of my most authentic self.

It's like the instant we see a butterfly, we recognize her beauty. But just as easily, we can overlook the darkest part of her journey. It is important to remember that the hardships we go through do not limit the potential we can grow into.

Thankfully, Ringling College was there to nurture my creative spirit and help me find my wings.

To me, being a Trustee Scholar meant that every choice I made leading up to that moment was worth it. It was the greatest reassurance that I'm on the right path. When I chose my own integrity, I found that life aligned toward my highest destiny.

The distinction of the Trustee Scholar and its accompanying scholarship is the highest honor awarded to students at Ringling College of Art and Design. It recognizes exceptional creative talent, demonstrated communication skills, distinction of mind, leadership ability, and service to the community.

Each year, the department heads and faculty in every major, as well as the Office of Student Life, choose two nominees for consideration. We each submit a written statement and create a short video to introduce ourselves as artists and creatives, along with our work. Then, from each pair of students, one of us is selected by the Board of Trustees to be named the Trustee Scholar. This year, one of those people was me.

During everyone's speeches, I was in awe. I got to know my colleagues, and their life stories in a way I never could in a classroom setting. The admiration and respect I have for each and every person who attended, in-person or virtually, cannot be conveyed in words. It became clear to me that night, I wasn't the only one whose darkest moments and memories alchemized into something lighter and healing. It takes great strength to create from the depth of one's being.

"Art gave me hope and the motivation to move forward in life," said Melvin Gomez. The Fine Arts Trustee Scholar opened an art school for children in his home country of El Salvador with a mission of breaking the cycle of gun violence, being a survivor himself.

Matthew Troyer served nine years in the United States Marine Corps. The Photography and Imaging Trustee Scholar admitted, "Initially, I avoided making work related to my military experiences, but now I have the tools to speak about my military experiences and combat trauma, and I'm able to share that with the world to help highlight these topics."

Dr. Thompson said it best. To emerge means to "transform in the face of adversity, to have the determination to overcome any challenge, and to rise triumphantly and step boldly into this ever evolving creative world. They have shown they can do all of that with grace and compassion."

And so we have.

Our class of 2021-2022 Scholars mastered the ability to transform during periods of darkness, whether we were learning ways to deal with a global pandemic and its aftermath or healing from personal traumas and internal battles. We each demonstrated in our individual lives as well as a collective, that when faced with adversity, we only emerge stronger and clearer in who we are as creatives. Our passions give us purpose and a reason to fight to live, and love, and share our stories through our art, because art is our way through life.





**TEKLA  
KHANTADZE**  
BUSINESS OF  
ART AND DESIGN



**ANUSHKA  
NAIR**  
COMPUTER ANIMATION



**KYKYE**  
CREATIVE WRITING



**REESE  
BOBO**  
FILM



**MELVIN  
GOMEZ**  
FINE ARTS



**GRANGER  
MARTIN**  
GAME ART



**ADAM  
MYERSCOUGH**  
GRAPHIC DESIGN



**OLIVER  
STEPHENSON**  
ILLUSTRATION



**AMANDA  
GODREAU**  
MOTION DESIGN



**MATTHEW  
LUPO**  
MOTION DESIGN



**MATTHEW  
TROYER**  
PHOTOGRAPHY AND  
IMAGING



**JOSEPH  
JANSSEN**  
VIRTUAL REALITY  
DEVELOPMENT



**CHEYANNE  
WITTER**  
VISUAL STUDIES



**SKYLAR  
STEWART**  
STUDENT LIFE





DR.  
**JASON  
GOOD**  
  
Vice President for  
Enrollment Management  
and Marketing

## Ringling Recruitment: It’s All Good

BY GAYLE GUYNUP | PORTRAIT BY MATTHEW HOLLER '11

Dr. Jason Good, Ringling College of Art and Design's new vice president for Enrollment Management and Marketing, is driven by the privilege of working with incredible young people on a daily basis and inspired by their passion for making a positive impact in their communities and the world around them.

Jason was born and grew up in Washington, D.C., attended a private liberal arts university in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and did his graduate work abroad, earning his master's and doctorate in Spain. His PhD research focused on building and developing welcoming and inclusive educational environments and curricula.

He ended up back in Harrisonburg, with his wife, a family nurse practitioner, where they raised their family, and worked for James Madison University in international education, and, most recently, Eastern Mennonite University where he was vice president for Innovation and Student Recruitment.

Jason has been working in higher education for the last 16 years, and is “passionate about the transformational impact higher education has in our society,” he said. “Having worked at both a liberal arts school and a state university, I was hungry for the opportunity to work at a leading and evolving school like Ringling College that is crystal clear in its vision of being the pre-eminent art and design school,” he said. “Focusing on internationalization, technology, industry experience, and career outcomes for its students, Ringling immediately stood out as a school rethinking the traditional model of education, and excelling at its execution.”

On a personal level, Jason was excited to relocate with his family to Sarasota. “My wife, Bryn, and I have two young kids, Mara, a 6-year-old girl, and James, a 9-year-old boy, and we are loving it here,” he said. “My family is my life and we love the new adventure and have jumped feet first into the active community here that provides such a great place for learning and growing.”

In his new position, Jason oversees the College's in-house Design Center, Marketing and Communications, Admissions, and Financial Aid. It's a big undertaking, but he's up to the challenge. “If you think about the recruitment and marketing processes, these are the pieces that come together to provide prospective students and their families with an understanding of the whole Ringling College experience,” Jason said. “Bringing these top-notch groups into one cohesive enrollment management and marketing team positions Ringling College strategically for reaching and continuing to attract top students.”

“Our goal is to increase access and inclusion through the marketing and recruitment process. From the first time a student may learn about Ringling College up to the point of their first semester on campus, we are committed to providing a high level of customer service and support as we work with students and families as they maneuver the admissions and financial aid process,” Jason said.

“Bringing enrollment management and marketing together shows a commitment here at Ringling College to a student-centered approach,” he said. “We are not only investing in our programs; we are equally investing in telling the story of these programs and getting a diverse group of incredibly talented students in the door.”

### One of the many things that attracted Jason to this position is the College’s commitment to encouraging a global world view.

“About 21 percent of our students are international, which is the highest international student population of all time and that's an important part of the College's strategic plan,” Jason said. “Having been an international graduate student myself, I am a firm believer in what a diverse student body brings to the classroom and campus environment, especially at an art and design school. It enables our students to see the world through a different lens, experience other cultures, and interpret things from a different point of view. It adds invaluable richness to the educational experience, and is one of the many reasons our graduates are so successful in the professional world.”

“I would hope that my background in international education will help us in those international recruitment efforts. We have a great team already, so I am looking to build on that strength,” he added.

“What has impressed me the most at Ringling College is the commitment of the faculty and staff to the College and its students. In talking to department heads, faculty, and staff, it is clear that we are a student-centered college,” Jason said. “On the recruitment side, faculty are committed to having authentic conversations with prospective students as they explore our programs and go through the college search process. Within days of being on Ringling's campus, you feel the commitment to the vision of becoming the pre-eminent art and design school in the world, and doing the work to make that happen. That commitment to excellence is really impressive.”

“It all starts, of course, with Dr. Thompson, who is a great visionary,” Jason says. “With a legacy of achievement and growth, and the way the campus has transformed over the years, the way we have added new programs, the way we are always on the cutting-edge, investing in technology, that comes from great leadership. I am just proud to be part of the team and am excited for the direction we are heading.”



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----- MENU -----

1 MATERIALS

2. ITEMS

3 COLORS

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WOMEN IN GAMES

How Colleges Can Help Diversify the Industry

By Laura Shoemaker

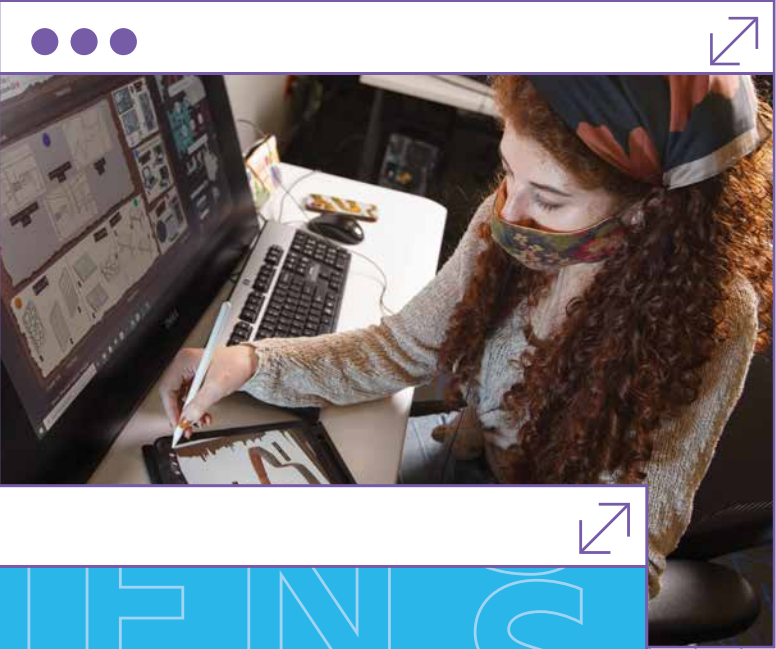
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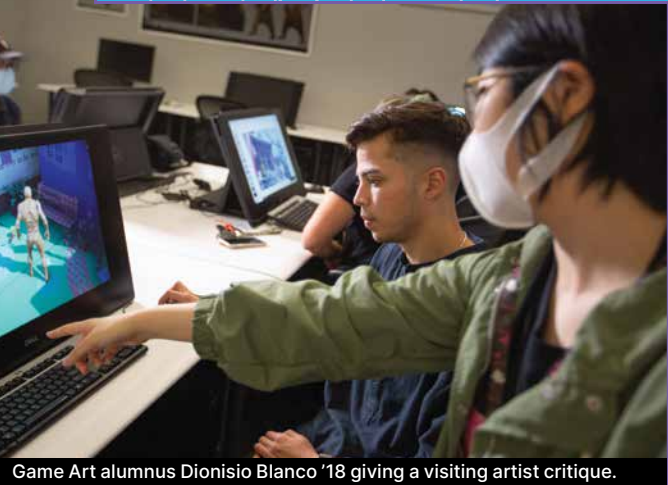
----- PLAY -----

SELECT : ▲▼ KEY

SET : ► KEY

END : ACTION KEY





Game Art alumnus Dionisio Blanco '18 giving a visiting artist critique.



Still from *Snacko*, a 3D farming sim created by Ringling College alumna Erisa Liu '19, Game Art, of Bluecourse Studios and forthcoming in 2022.

By the time college plans are being discussed, many teenage girls have written off the idea of becoming game developers, or even worse, don't realize it's a career option for them. Stereotypes and cultural attitudes have steered many girls away from making games, just as they have fallen out of thinking about science and technology-based careers, like becoming an architect or an engineer, which according to the American Association of University Women, are two of the least likely STEM occupations that women pursue.

Still, there are young women who, against these odds, find their way into a college Game Art program to prepare for a career in games. How do they get there, and what can be learned by their example?

In the previous five years, Ringling College of Art and Design's Game Art department has maintained, on average, an equal number of males and females studying in the major. Some of these students apply specifically to study Game Art, but some decide to switch into it after arriving on campus.

One of those students was Erisa Liu '19, Game Art. Erisa is the co-founder and lead artist at Bluecourse Studios. The studio's inaugural game, *Snacko*, is forthcoming in 2022 to Switch and PC. The game, a 3D farming sim, all started with her obsession with cats.

Originally, Erisa devised a gaming project in her junior year at Ringling College to build upon her experience while she was a student. She came up with the idea of making the art for a hypothetical game based on three components: nostalgia for the game experience of her childhood, her enjoyment of sims, and her love of cats.

Erisa grew up on Nintendo, and the low-pixel style of these older games that she played as a kid—noticeably different from the industry standard—is what she gravitated towards when she started making art for the project. Once she showed off some of her work on Twitter, the cute cat-inhabited towns and farms prompted queries about when the game would be released.

It got Erisa thinking, "What if we could actually make this?"

The "we" in question were Erisa and her husband, who is a programmer. They decided to give it a shot and moved back to Vancouver, Canada. Her husband quit his job to work full-time on the project, and another Ringling College alumni eventually joined the team as well.

Erisa says her courses at Ringling prepared her for the challenges of being an indie developer. Faculty always pushed her to go back and re-do her work to make it better, which she explains makes a developer "good at the process of distancing yourself from your bias." The repeated revisions not only helped her work but helped her become "desensitized to stress."

Renee Bates, a visual development artist and professor in Ringling College's Game Art department, commented on the importance of artists developing the ability to remove personal bias and handle stress, along with technical skills, in college.

"These experiences can be part of mastering your craft. You have to learn to create balance for yourself."

Making *Snacko* posed no small amount of risk for a new graduate. The year Erisa and the team gave themselves to make the game a reality stretched into three before they finally found a publisher, Armor Games Studios.

Erisa considers Bluecourse and other indie studios important to the industry mix. "Indie developers can take more risks," she said, which helps the industry by infusing creativity and variety into the pipeline.

Maximizing creativity is regarded as a significant benefit of increasing diversity and inclusion in the industry.

Based on her industry experiences, Professor Bates adds, "A dynamic studio culture can challenge creativity to produce something magical." The capability for a team to produce "magic" can be taught and nurtured, starting in the classroom.

Bates encourages her students to remember what sparked their initial excitement to make games in the first place. Simply liking to play games won't sustain them in their journey. "Find your why," she advises, because the challenges of learning can be intense, and no matter how skilled a student is, sometimes failure is inevitable.

**"That original spark of inspiration is the feeling that helps pull you through the hard times and gives you a reason why you are exactly where you should be, somewhere along your journey."**



Other female Game Art students take a more straightforward path of working for a studio after graduation. Katelyn Johnson '19, Game Art, is an environment texture artist at Naughty Dog.

Katelyn, who grew up in the Midwest making art and playing sports, was accepted into the Illustration program at Ringling College but quickly changed her major to Game Art after seeing student portfolios from the major at her part-time campus job in Career Services.

Once in the Game Art major, she said she had “an abrupt awakening.” It seemed like more students had prior experience with software and concepts, and she struggled initially. Katelyn soon found a solution that worked for her was to simply put in more hours.

She enjoyed crafting spaces and the collaboration she found among peers in her major. But it took her a long time to achieve at the same level, having to put in double the hours or even restart several times.

Katelyn said “a switch was flipped” for her when she took a course in making materials. In that class, her interest in Unreal Engine and Substance Designer clicked, and she felt that she was making fundamental stepping stones to her future in the field. Notably, she felt encouraged by her professors to keep at it and try harder.

Several weeks before graduation in her senior year, Naughty Dog contacted her about a texture position she had applied for. She had to take an art test—which she says she enjoyed—and that was it. She got the job.

Since then, she completed a contract with Santa Monica Studio before returning to Naughty Dog earlier this fall. Along the way, she has found mentors in other women developers who have helped her grow in confidence, especially when she is the only female in the conference room. “We’re not really taught to stick up for ourselves, but these women have helped me overcome those obstacles,” she explained about the value of these relationships. She actively seeks opportunities to explore and grow—in communication, artistic ability, and being a bridge between departments. She hopes to one day be a mentor and leader herself.

To achieve all that she sets out to do takes discipline. “I live on routine,” she explained, and hasn’t lost the competitive edge that sports taught her, though mostly, the competition is only a factor when she’s trying to improve herself; she gets more out of collaboration with the team.



**“You have to be ambitious in game development. There’s art, and then there’s development, which is a whole different set of skills.” She’s observed that there aren’t a lot of female leads (yet), especially in environment art, and is prepared to take the time she needs to get there. She feels the pressure to keep on her toes, doing personal artwork and professional development after hours. She plans to get as much information and growth from learning from others in the industry, “not to avoid the hard stuff but to hopefully handle it differently.”**

**Top:** Ringling College alumna Katelyn Johnson '19, Game Art, works with Ringling Game Art students on campus.

**Bottom:** Still from game *The Last of Us, Part II* by Katelyn Johnson '19.

Game Art students not only need to learn skills to get jobs, but Game Art programs must also encourage and support students, to foster their personal development along with their professional skills.

Morgan Woolverton, interim department head of Game Art and Virtual Reality Development at Ringling College, explains, “Helping all students feel comfortable in discovering and expressing their unique creativity will have the greatest value and influence in the industry.”

Yet another way that colleges can increase diversity in games is through their esports programs. Women who play games have much stake in creating positive changes in the industry. Esports is rapidly growing, estimated to reach \$2.5 billion by 2024, with popularity on college campuses rising, too.

E Ramey, Recreation and Wellness coordinator at Ringling College, recognizes that esports can be a “male-dominated world,” a trend reflected in the esports rosters at other traditional colleges and universities.

**With leadership from students like Andrea Saravia Pérez, a senior in Creative Writing at Ringling, the College launched its esports program in March 2020. Pérez plays on the Varsity Overwatch team, the Ringling Rollers. They are quick to point out how the College’s esports culture is supportive and reflects the diversity of the campus as a whole. Not only are there students from almost all of the College’s 13 majors involved in intramural games, but the players include women, gender-nonconforming individuals, people of color, and other minorities.**

There’s been an emphasis from the start on building a positive culture—a community based on improving skills and making friends. “While still being competitive,” Andrea explained, “the program at Ringling College has a casual atmosphere and is primarily organized to bring students together in a coordinated way through teams and coaching.”

In addition to the Varsity Overwatch team, which is a member of the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE), the Ringling Rollers are also composed of a Super Smash Bros. team. Unlike some collegiate esports

programs, which according to Ramey are commonly designed by administrators, Ringling has prioritized listening to what the students want and letting that guide the program. Based on student interest, there are plans to add two more varsity teams for Rocket League and League of Legends, and continued growth through recruitment and scholarships.

Andrea’s vision is for diversity to be a defining component of the program, to reflect an inclusive environment where any prospective student could “see the top players and think, ‘I can do that, too.’”

Ringling College’s Smash varsity esports team practices on campus, photo taken by Andrea Saravia Pérez '22, Creative Writing.

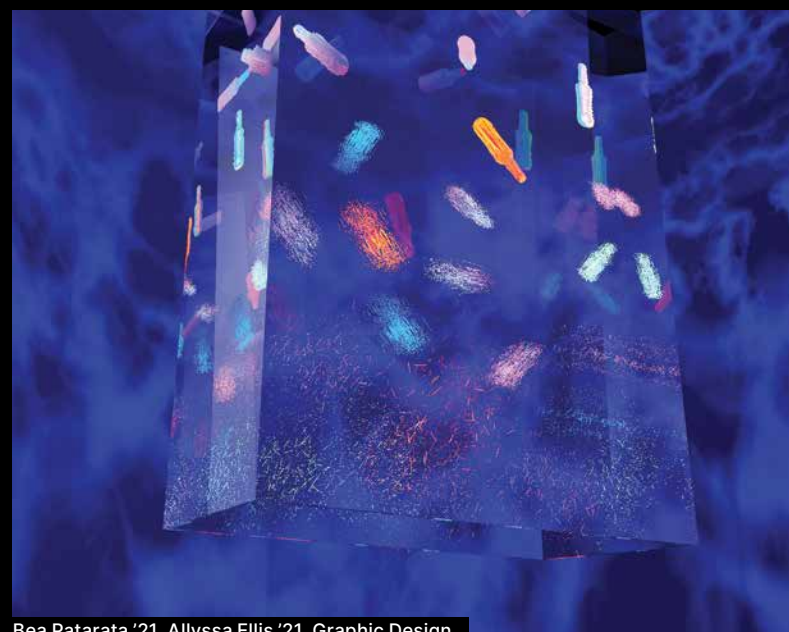


The student-created logo for the esports varsity team, Ringling Rollers.

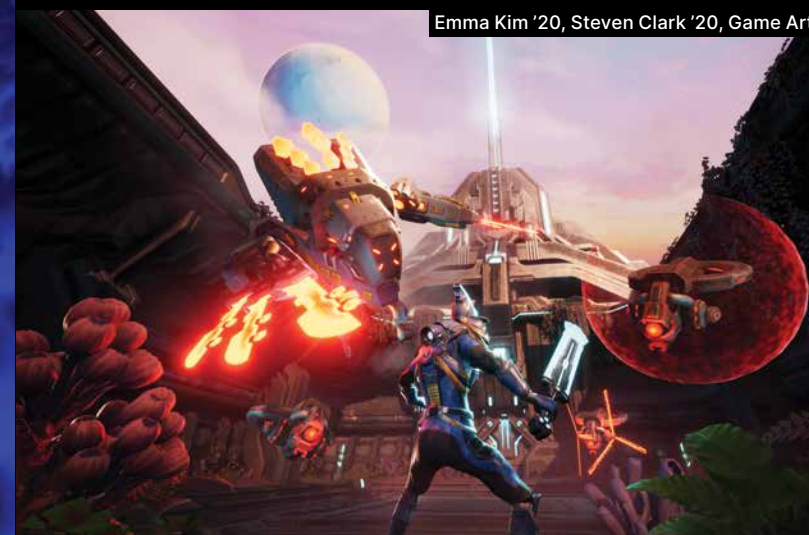




Your  
support  
brings  
creativity  
to life.



Bea Patarata '21, Allyssa Ellis '21, Graphic Design



Emma Kim '20, Steven Clark '20, Game Art



Sam Seeger '20, Fine Arts



Colin Coviello '20, Illustration

At Ringling College of Art and Design, creativity is the driving force of all that we do. It inspires every aspect of our daily lives, even beyond the artwork so beautifully created by our students. Creativity empowers us to re-imagine how the world works. It changes lives. And your support makes it possible.

The emerging artists and designers of Ringling College have talent beyond measure and a true passion for their craft. They are dedicated to achieving great things, but they can't always do it alone. The generosity of donors helps alleviate financial hardships for students, provides cutting-edge resources for faculty, and fosters an entire community of creativity. We hope you will join us as we navigate a new world—one where creativity comes to life.



Clark Perkins '20, Photography and Imaging



Grace Cheung '16, Illustration



Doug Alberts '20, Motion Design



Maria Bjarnadottir '20, Di Kalaha '20, Computer Animation



Chelsea Kennedy '20, Visual Studies



Cain Hopkins '19, AJ Mize '19, MaKayla Hensley '19, Virtual Reality Development





# Virginia Shearer

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Sarasota Art Museum of  
Ringling College of Art and Design

## Curating the Next Chapter of Sarasota Art Museum

By Gayle Guynup | Portrait by Nancy Guth

**If you ask Virginia Shearer, new executive director of the Sarasota Art Museum, what gets her up in the morning, her answer would be two-fold: education and art. “My why, what wakes me up early and keeps me going is that everything we do has the potential to make people’s lives better.”**

Virginia is proud of her Southern roots and her ties to the Pacific Northwest. Originally from Alabama, she spent her early years in Portland, Oregon and northern Florida, graduating from Florida State University in 1992 where she majored in humanities and art history. She studied abroad in Florence, Italy, an experience she describes as “pivotal, because I was able to visit so many extraordinary collections and go behind-the-scenes to learn about the core of museum work.”

Shearer has worked in museums across the country from Albuquerque, NM to Portland, OR, to Washington D.C., and completed her graduate work at The George Washington University. She worked at the Freer and Sackler Galleries, the Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art, and, in 1997 was recruited to move south and work on educational programming at The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota.

“The reason I wanted to become a museum educator is the recognition that so many people are intimidated when they walk into an art museum. I’m passionate about finding ways to inspire curiosity through art and art education, and helping to break down those barriers. There’s a lot of magic that can happen when someone catches that initial spark. It might be a single work of art or the experience as a whole, and suddenly a whole new world opens for a visitor,” she said.

“I loved my time at The Ringling and living in Sarasota. At that time, The Ringling was open to experimentation and devoted significant space to participatory education exhibitions. It was a generative time and we were able to experiment with a lot of different types of programs to get people interested and engaged,” she said.

From The Ringling, Virginia went on to serve as Deputy Director for Education and Public Programs at the Tampa Museum of Art and contributed to the planning efforts and development of the new Tampa Museum building. In 2005, she was recruited again, this time by Atlanta’s High Museum of Art, the leading art museum in the Southeast, to run its education division and serve on the museum’s executive team during a period of significant institutional growth. At the High, Virginia oversaw a robust operation and was responsible for driving attendance to new heights.

Among her proudest achievements at the High Museum was a multi-year initiative to build a patron base for the future. “Research confirms that early family museum visits forge lasting memories and translate into lifelong museum visitation. We recognized that the family audience was untapped for us at the High, so I began curating exhibitions specifically for children and their caregivers. Our “Picture Book” exhibition series featured the work of beloved illustrators, from E.H. Shephard, who brought us *Winnie-the-Pooh*, to Eric Carle of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* fame, and Maira Kalman, a frequent illustrator for *The New Yorker*,” Virginia explained. “The series is still going strong and I’m proud to leave that legacy in Atlanta for a community I love,” she said.

“The patron of the future is the toddler of today. So, we have to always be thinking that way, and I will certainly be thinking that same way here at Sarasota Art Museum,” she said.

“For art museums to remain relevant and vital to our communities, we must be intentional about engaging audiences across generations. I was thrilled to learn that the Sarasota Art Museum campus is home to an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) and look forward to strengthening the connections between this existing program and the Museum.”

“My mantra is, what we see today is not necessarily what we want for the future. We always need to be thinking about what’s next and how we can remain relevant and compelling for our community. And that is where Sarasota Art Museum’s connection with Ringling College of Art and Design is invaluable. This relationship makes our Museum Campus truly unique among American contemporary art museums. The fact that we’re a visual arts education center with a museum at its heart, means that education is central to the Museum’s DNA. We’re tapping into our educational mission all the time, in as many ways as we can. It’s very exciting!”

In December 2020, Virginia and her family visited Sarasota. “When we went to the Museum, which had been open for just one year, I was blown away. The exhibits were interesting and accessible, the building and grounds were beautiful, and my first thought was, ‘They nailed it.’ So, when I got the recruiter’s call a few months later, I could picture the Museum and envision how I could contribute to this community’s bold dream,” she said.

“By the time I met Larry Thompson and the search committee, the Sarasota Art Museum was already living in my imagination. I could see the possibilities. I had internalized the dream. The decision to lead the Museum into its next chapter and to cement the Museum’s position as a pillar of Sarasota’s cultural community was an easy decision,” she said.

The family made the move to Sarasota in the fall of 2021. Virginia is married to Arkady Medovoy, a New College graduate, who works in public health administration. The two were married in Sarasota, and have a 14-year-old son named Reed and a 12-year-old daughter, Willow who attend Sarasota School of Arts and Sciences. “Reed and Willow are as thrilled as I am to join this creative community. They’re interested in video game design, computer animation, and storytelling. They can’t wait until they’re old enough to attend Ringling’s PreCollege program,” their proud mother said.

Virginia believes one of Sarasota Art Museum’s most important roles is to be a public facing example of all that Ringling College of Art and Design has to offer. “We are a community-centered museum, and that’s how the College is positioned, as well. Whereas many colleges are insular, Ringling College has always been public facing and dedicated to making a positive impact locally. I view the Museum as the College’s living laboratory for exploring and advancing contemporary art. As a public institution, we must be ambassadorial, welcoming, and exemplify Ringling College’s commitment to art and design at the highest caliber. We are undoubtedly a jewel box museum. Our challenge and our opportunity is to become a magnet where all members of our ever-changing community are drawn to be transported through great art and design,” Virginia said.



# ZERO TO SIXTY

Interviews & Stories  
by Nicole Caron

Ringling College students are well trained to jump on opportunities. Recruiter presentations, portfolio reviews, and Career Services sessions all work together to help students land exciting, prestigious positions and fulfill the College's number one goal: Helping them turn their passions into professions.

Here are four 2021 alumni who sailed into their first dream jobs within sixty days of graduation.

REBECCA  
MIRANDA

GRAPHIC DESIGN



GRADUATED:  
MAY 2021  
HIRED:  
MAY 2021

**JUNIOR  
DESIGNER**  
*GUT Agency, Miami, Florida*

Rebecca Miranda (Becca) came to Ringling College with a certificate in digital media/multimedia design from McFatter Technical College. Becca's design teacher there had several Ringling books that hooked her interest. She describes "freaking out" when she sent her portfolio "last minute, my Senior year," and when receiving her acceptance letter and the Dean's Scholarship within what seemed like a few days. "Last minute impulses do work at times!" she says.

Class projects helped Becca refine the skills she brought to her first job. While working towards a minor in Business of Art and Design, she created an entire marketing plan for a business class and created a synchronized swimming exhibition highlighting her former swim coach's accomplishments as a first Black woman in her field. She also designed, laser printed, and hand-painted a small replica of a street in Viejo San Juan, Puerto Rico, showcasing her home and her roots. Becca cites her Typography, Portfolio, and Graphic Design 3D courses as particularly influential.

Becca parlayed that experience into her first position at Miami-based GUT Agency. She began applying for jobs in April 2021, through LinkedIn, and notes that in one week she applied to twenty-six positions. "I thought I would either have to move to L.A., New York, Portland, or Seattle," she says. "Then GUT appeared on my LinkedIn feed. I sent my application, shut off my computer and said good night. The following day I had a message saying, 'what a professional email - we'd like to sit down and talk with you.' Out of those twenty-six, only one other agency reached out to me. Within a week I had an interview. I got a job offer the next day. That was mid-April, I started May 3."

In fall 2021, Becca designed the key visuals and posters for social media for musical artist Megan Thee Stallion's *Hottie Sauce* campaign in partnership with Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen. Becca recalls that when Megan Thee Stallion posted it on her Instagram, she almost cried. "That was my first project at GUT," she recalls.

*"Ringling is very rigorous," Becca says. "You have to really look after yourself and ask, am I really serious about this? If you did 100 [designs], then do 110. Push yourself to the limit to improve. If you're really certain about what you want to do, start looking at places where you want to apply. You should already have a resume and keep it and your portfolio updated. Make sure the major/career you choose to pursue brings you happiness and enjoyment. That is the most important thing, if you love what you do then you can conquer anything and everything with your passion."*

MARIKA  
TAMURA

COMPUTER ANIMATION



GRADUATED:  
MAY 2021  
HIRED:  
JUNE 2021

**JUNIOR PROP  
DESIGNER**  
*Laika, Hillsboro, Oregon*

During her time at Ringling College, Computer Animation major Marika Tamura racked up several significant awards, including Finalist in the 2021 Student Academy Awards (for *Final Deathtination*), Rookie Awards 2021 Runner-up for 3D Animation Film of the Year (*Final Deathtination*), 2021 Best of Ringling Silver Juror's Award, and Most Outstanding Junior Award 2020 in Computer Animation. Prior to her time at Ringling, Marika studied English in Canada for three years (Japanese is her first language).

*"Growing up in Japan I watched anime," Marika says. "Anime is popular in Japan but CG (computer graphics) is not mainstream yet. I got more interested in American-style CG when I watched American animation. I want to bring my culture into my work. Hopefully someday Japan will get represented in CG animation—combining the two is my dream."*

Sophomore to senior year courses helped Marika understand how animation is created. "Although I'm a prop designer it's still really helpful to know how people make it after I do the concept art. Understanding the whole process is a strong advantage that we get from Ringling's animation program," she says.

*Marika's advice to current students is to "help each other inside and outside the department. I grew more when I asked upper-class students for more feedback. I was able to push myself by doing that. Take advantage of mentorship programs if your department has that. That's how I met mine. It's a small community and Ringling helped us make connections between each other."*

She credits Visual Development courses and faculty members George Cwirko and Paul Downes with improving and refining her work. "George was helpful even outside of class, giving me resources and feedback on my personal projects," she says. "He gave me artists' work that inspired me. Paul helped me bring my thesis to a higher level than I would have been able to."

A Laika recruiter visited virtually in the winter of Marika's junior year, doing email portfolio reviews. Marika was offered an internship which was unfortunately canceled due to COVID. She kept in touch, updated her portfolio, contacted them again in spring 2021 and then landed the internship. Marika started in June 2021 and by early September was a prop designer.

"Prop is anything the characters use," Marika explains. "Anything that can be designed that can be used in the environment, like furniture, weapons, transportation, etc. Laika is a stop-motion studio, not CG, so they create props by hand. I create a full design for the props and then they are created. It's so satisfying watching them come to life."



GABBY  
SCIANNA

PHOTOGRAPHY & IMAGING



GRADUATED:  
MAY 2021  
HIRED:  
MAY 2021

LUKE  
TIDAY

MOTION DESIGN



GRADUATED:  
MAY 2021  
HIRED:  
JUNE 2021

## ASSISTANT SOCIAL MEDIA ART DIRECTOR

*Abercrombie Kids, Abercrombie  
& Fitch Co., Columbus, Ohio*

Gabby Scianna, a Photography and Imaging graduate from Youngstown, Ohio, also used LinkedIn to apply to what she describes as “hundreds of jobs.”

“Abercrombie & Fitch Co./Hollister wanted applicants to make a TikTok showing their design creativity to be hired,” Gabby says. “I was recruited through TikTok within 30 minutes of posting my video! I interviewed with them for a month and a half. After applying for several jobs, I was accepted May 12, we graduated May 13, and I started June 1.”

Gabby started at Abercrombie Kids by curating their Instagram and working with a copywriter to plan week by week and month by month posts. “I still do all the social media curation but now I’m working towards design and art direction building out TGC boards (talent-generated content), shoot planning, art directing flat lays, and I help design our Instagram stories,” she says.

Gabby says that in-class presentations three times a week more than prepared her for the professional world. “Everything I used at Ringling, I use here,” she says.

Her shout-outs go to her Advanced Studio Lighting and Fashion classes. “At Ringling all the photography professors did a fantastic job of pushing us creatively and giving us the basics. Even if I already know how to do something, I think you can always learn it again, because you’ll always learn something new.”

She advises current students not to be afraid to apply to the jobs that don’t require their major: “Don’t assume you’re not qualified for the job. I knew a lot more about marketing than I thought I did. Make sure you are creating genuine relationships with your professors and classmates and outside your major. They will take you a very long way.”

Gabby’s first love is fashion photography, and she held several exhibitions while a student. Starting a new job, however has made it tricky to keep up with her passion projects.

*“I’m trying to prioritize my own creativity,” she says. “Working was a big adjustment. I’m only six months in and I’m still learning something new every day.” Of the transition to professional life, she wisely noted: “You don’t realize how big your bubble burst will be until you leave [Ringling].”*

## PROCEDURAL TECH ARTIST

*Microsoft*

Luke Tiday came to Ringling College from Pennsylvania to learn more about 3D graphics and study Motion Design. Luke nailed his job interview two months before graduation and started work one month later. At a previous internship, he used his experience to work on a rock-climbing wall that projected an animation around a person climbing. His department head, Ed Cheetham, introduced him to a friend at Microsoft who was also a Ringling alum. After seeing the climbing wall project, they set up an interview.

“I trained a machine learning algorithm by using 3D models of Lucky Charms to recognize the different marshmallows,” Luke says. “I sent the company a write up, created a blog post of my experiments, then I got the job offer.”

Luke credits the Motion Design department for establishing and encouraging independent experimentation and exploration, which helped him become “job ready,” and also his time working with ART Network.

“I went to see every recruiter/presenter because I was filming them,” he recalls. “I was the first and last person to talk to the presenters because I was hooking up their mics. That was a ridiculously awesome gig and a super cool lifehack.”

Current students should start thinking of themselves as professionals now, Luke advises. “Lots of people want to wait to have all the required skill sets but that’s not necessary, because industry tools are changing all the time,” he explains. “So many diverse job opportunities exist for 3D artists but are not commonly known or understood. Synthetic Data for training machine learning is at the core of what I do. It’s a rapidly growing field and I hope to inspire more people to pursue it as a career.”

One of the most innovative strategies Luke uses is a career wish list posted on his website. “It’s similar to the law of attraction,” he says. “If I put the words out there, the search engines will find them. It’s not magic—it’s the algorithms. Someone reached out to me about my career wish to ‘Create 3D animated visuals for a museum exhibit.’ I had just signed with my current job, so I couldn’t take it. I told the guy: ‘not right now, but some day.’ I have that connection, so I can reopen it any time.”

*“One of my career wishes is to ‘help define the workflow for artists working with artificial intelligence.’ I’m doing that right now! And it was on my list before I got my current job.”*





## Ringling College's Center for Diversity and Inclusion offers crucial support to the campus community.

This article was written and illustrated by Ringling College students!

Written by Al Taylor '24, Creative Writing  
Artwork by Abigail Rajunov '23, Illustration

Ringling College of Art and Design is a vibrant campus filled with some of the most talented people I've had the pleasure of meeting. Within this already extraordinary school lies the beating heart of the College: the Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI). Founded in 2019, a team of dedicated students, faculty, and staff came together to create the Center as a safe space for every member of the campus community. At the CDI, they focus on information and educational programming, specializing in spreading awareness on topics that are often under- or misrepresented.

**Two of the CDI's most important programs are the Queer Closet and Remy's Cupboard. Both programs serve to aid students on campus who may be in a vulnerable situation, where it can be hard to seek help outside of the College itself.**

The Queer Closet is set up to offer free, gender-affirming clothing items to any member of the campus community. Every item up for grabs has been donated by faculty, students, staff, and Sarasota-Manatee community members. It's a good way to recycle gently-used clothing and minimize waste on campus. Additionally, these items allow gender nonconforming or gender explorative students to try out new styles in a no-risk, safe space, at no monetary cost.

Yoleidy Rosario-Hernandez (ze/zir/zirs), associate dean of students and director of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, aspires to use the Queer Closet as a way to grant opportunities to LGBTQ+ students who may struggle financially and cannot afford identity-affirming clothing. Also, for those who are not out yet, they may not want to risk purchasing the type of clothes they want.

In addition, the CDI recently initiated a chest binder donation drive in honor of Trans Day of Remembrance. Many gender nonconforming students at Ringling College are unable to acquire their own binders, and many simply do not have the resources to find donated ones. This initiative provides students with the opportunity to receive a free binder, and informs the community about binders and how they work. Binder safety is something often overlooked by individuals looking to transition, and the CDI's program, alongside the Queer Closet, seeks to inform and educate without judgment or consequence.

Those interested can shop the available clothes, accessories, shoes, and under-garments (all of which are thoroughly washed beforehand by CDI staff) at either the CDI office or at the Queer Closet pop-up, held once a month on Scott Plaza. All pop-up dates are posted in advance on the CDI's official Instagram: @cdi\_ringling

Another equally successful resource provided by the CDI is Remy's Cupboard, a food and hygiene pantry for anyone on campus in need of aid. Regular access to healthy and diet-sensitive food is crucial to the student body, especially at an institution as mentally and physically demanding as Ringling College. The fast-paced working environment can oftentimes lead to students neglecting their personal needs, especially as they are still learning to balance their workload and manage their time effectively, away from home. The CDI created this initiative in 2021, and their website lists the inspiration behind the program as being able to "ensure that no one at Ringling College of Art and Design should have to choose between buying course materials or buying groceries."

The CDI prides itself on accessibility and equal access for all, so they've partnered with All Faiths Food Bank—a local Sarasota nonprofit—to donate food to Remy's Cupboard.

For the low price of free (with the exception of providing a student or employee ID) anyone on campus can "purchase" food from the pantry, with no limitations and no strings attached. The resource also provides sanitary products and other essentials such as toothpaste and deodorant. The process is mostly anonymous, but CDI staff can use the ID number to identify someone who may be in extreme need, beyond the basics of what Remy's Cupboard can provide.

Although both the Queer Closet and Remy's Cupboard can be found on the second floor of the Ulla Searing building in the Student Life Center, only the pantry program allows students and employees to reserve items on the CDI website. After adding items to the online cart, you can select a timeslot to pick up the order. As simple as that, easy peasy.

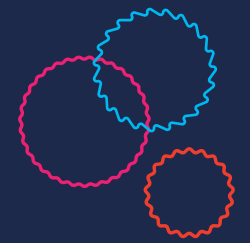
The CDI has quickly made its way into the hearts of the Ringling community since its opening, and both the Queer Closet and Remy's Cupboard are some of the most impactful, and most-used resources on campus. I have personally utilized both resources countless times in my two years at Ringling College, and I am so grateful for the aid and support that the Center provides.

As a whole, nothing brings the CDI team closer to the campus it serves than the unwavering support of its staff and student volunteers. The goal is to ensure that Ringling College is a safe space for everyone, regardless of identity, race, sexual orientation, or background, and to educate on these important subjects. I invite you to check out the programs offered by Ringling's Center for Diversity and Inclusion, and to take a moment to admire the dedication and unwavering support they can offer.

**The Ringling College CDI team is, first and foremost, a second family.**



# #RinglingWins



Ringling's students sweep 2022 **Women in Animation Awards**

Computer Animation freshman awarded **AIGA Worldstudio Scholarship**

Computer Animation graduates win an **Emmy** for Outstanding Individual Achievement in Animation

Fine Arts student **featured on PBS**

Fine Arts alumni selected as **2022-23 Fulbright Semi-Finalist**

Ringling College alumni and student win **"Emerging Filmmaker Scholarships"** from the annual *Visions of the Black Experience* Film Festival

Ringling College students sweep the **ADDY Awards**:

Film students win ADDY Awards: **Gold** for Music and Sound Design, and **Student Best in Show**

Motion Design students win ADDY Awards: 11 **Gold**, 31 **Silver**, and 2 **Judges' Choice Award**

Graphic Design students win ADDY Awards: 6 **Gold**, 14 **Silver**, and 1 **Judges' Choice Award**

Two Graphic Design students named **"Students to Watch"** in 2022 by *GDUSA*

Illustration student wins **Illustrators of the Future** Contest

Illustration student selected as **2022-23 Fulbright Semi-Finalist**

Creative Writing students secure **internships and employment** at leading publications and literary agencies

Visual Studies grad illustrates book at **#1 on NY Times Best Sellers List**: Stacey's *Extraordinary Words* and wins **NAACP Image Award**

Ringling students selected to **exhibit artwork in Visions in Black**

Virtual Reality Development student **collaborates with Moffitt Cancer Center** to create VR Training Module

Ringling College announced as **2021 ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Award Winner**



# THE ART OF GIVING

DEAR FRIENDS,

Standing in the courtyard in the Arland and Sally Christ-Janer Center, I can't help but reflect upon how so many people care for Ringling College of Art and Design. Our students, parents, alumni, friends, faculty, and staff all make such a difference.

Recently, our Advancement team was asked if there might be an opportunity to beautify this courtyard. After early conversations with a few donors it was a no brainer. "Of course," they offered. Home to our largest major, Illustration, this space is now a welcome retreat, a contemplative space, a source of sunlight and moonlight for our campus community. Thanks go to Department Head Scott Gordley, Debi Dube, Stefanie Voinea '21, Interior Design, donors Jan Schmidt (trustee), and Judy and Fred Fiala who all stepped up to make the dream into a reality.

The courtyard improvement is just one of many examples where generous supporters step up to positively impact our campus and students. And following three academic years of "not normal," we all have a greater appreciation for positivity.

This year, as I was speaking with the parent of a new student, I had the opportunity to learn about her philanthropic nature and how she had seen the impact of her giving throughout her life. It was a pleasure to talk with her about the many ways donor support makes a difference for our students. She thoughtfully considered how she could be supportive of Ringling College, selected a cause here for which she is passionate, and then joyfully made her first gift to Ringling College.

Generosity doesn't stop with financial support. It is also shown on our campus every day through the generosity of service and volunteerism. Our students are dedicated to volunteering both on campus and locally to make a difference in our community. Combined, they contribute over 15,000 hours of service each year. And we are fortunate to have alumni, staff, faculty, parents, and friends who volunteer their time.

As you read through this issue of CONXT, I hope you enjoy learning about a few of the people who have given generously from their hearts who positively impact Ringling College. If you are interested in learning how you can do the same, please contact us. Our Advancement team is here to assist you in making a gift—a gift that is meaningful to you—and in turn, will make a meaningful impact on a student, a visitor at the Museum, a lifelong learning student, a teacher, a staff member, the list goes on and on. Your gift is a true investment in the future and a catalyst for creativity!

Warmest regards,

STACEY R. CORLEY

Vice President for Advancement

giving@ringling.edu | 941-359-7674 | ringling.edu/advancement



Stacey Corley in the newly renovated courtyard of the Arland and Sally Christ-Janer Center. Portrait by Elan Photography.

## Picturing a Bright Future for Ringling College Students

By Gayle Guynup | Portrait by Matthew Holler '11

Hudson Smith lived a life with many interests, including a career that involved both engineering and operations management. For relief from the daily "grind," he developed a special passion for photography. So much so that in his post-retirement years, he decided to make a generous legacy gift to Ringling College of Art and Design, as well as endowing a named scholarship in support of arts education.

Hudson was born in Illinois, then moved to Kentucky when he was 13. He lived there through his college days, attending the University of Kentucky, where he earned a degree in chemical engineering. After college he went to work for a company in Louisiana, but after a year the draft began. He signed up for The U.S. Army Officer Cadet School and was commissioned as an officer in the Chemical Corps.

After serving in the Army at the height of the Vietnam War, he was offered a job in Lake City, FL in the mining and chemical business. He began work in the engineering department where he was awarded a patent on a new process, then later went into management. After 20 years he was offered a job in Lakeland where he joined a large engineering and construction company with major operations throughout the U.S. and Europe.

"While living in Lakeland, my wife, Anne, and I would come over to the Gulf Coast for long weekends, which was a good introduction to the area," Hudson said. "That's when we really began to enjoy it here and think of it as a potential post-retirement home."

"I wasn't really aware of Ringling College of Art and Design until we moved to Venice," Hudson recalled, adding that photography has been a hobby of his since the mid-1970s. "I had just about given it up because of time constraints while I was working, however when Anne and I retired, I picked it up again."

"I think on my first visit to the College, I went to a photography exhibit that was being held on campus. I was very impressed," Hudson said. "The talent of the students is just off the charts. Since then, I have had the opportunity to have conversations with some of the students, and they continue to impress me, both as young people just starting their careers, and as artists."

Hudson also had a chance to meet Tom Carabasi (department head of the Photography and Imaging degree program at Ringling College). "Through Tom, I became familiar with the College and all of its accomplishments," he said. "Tom was also good enough to give a presentation to the Venice Camera Club at my request. His presentation was much appreciated by all members of the Club."

"I met Larry Thompson just before I made my first donation to the College," Hudson said. "I think he is a remarkable man, very dedicated to the College. He understands art and design, but also the business of art. He also relates very well to everyone from the staff and faculty to the students. He's a great fit for Ringling College."



Hudson Smith visiting Ringling College.

## HUDSON SMITH

Hudson and his wife share a love of art in all of its many forms. "My interest in art definitely extends beyond photography, but that is what piqued my interest in the College and its programs," he said.

Over the years, Hudson has self-published multiple books of his photography, the first of which was published in 2011, featuring pictures of the Venice area and titled *The Other Venice*. He is pleased to have sold several hundred copies, but would only offer them at printing price. Although he has never sought to make money with his photography, he says it has always brought him joy, as do the gifts he has made to Ringling College.

"Anne and I have been fortunate to travel around the world, and I have been able to put my photography to good use on those trips," Hudson said. "We have been to nearly every country in Europe, as we lived there for a little over a year, and several countries across the Pacific. I have created a book on many of those trips, plus one that covers several driving trips within the U.S. called *Road Trips*. It's been a lot of fun," he said.

"Our endowed scholarship has benefited many students, and when I was able to meet each of the recipients, I was struck by how diverse the students were in their art, their points of view, and everything," Hudson said. "There are so many people in this world with a lot of talent, and if they do not develop those talents it will be such a tremendous loss. That's why I decided to focus on scholarships in my giving. If I can provide someone with that kind of opportunity, then it is putting my money to good use," he said.

"There is also significant support in my will committed to Ringling College of Art and Design as a legacy gift," Hudson said. "It is true that I was involved in a very technical, engineering-based career for most of my life. And while there is a creative aspect to that work, in my giving, I felt it was important to support the arts, in all its many genres," he said.



# Investing in the Future of Young Artists

By Gayle Guynup | Photo by Elan Photography

Daniel E. Offutt, III, grew up in Maryland and spent most of his career as a stockbroker in New York, and the last 30 years of his life on his farm in Weston, Connecticut. In his own way, Daniel has had a tremendous impact on art and design in Sarasota, Florida.

His close friend, Dick Orenstein, first met Dan in the early 1980s at a computer club meeting. At the time, Dan was having difficulty getting digital photos from the camera to the computer, and sorting and storing them. Dick became Dan's computer go-to guy, while Dan became Dick's handyman, and their friendship grew from there. Eventually, Dan asked Dick to be the executor and then trustee of his estate.

"Dan and I were friends for 30-some years before he passed away on November 24, 2016, on Thanksgiving Day," Orenstein said.

Dan was a self-described farmer, who lived in a home that he had built on his property in Weston. He later added a barn on the rustic property. He had a multitude of interests and talents, everything from his many animals, to tennis, traveling, sailing, metal sculpting and woodworking, stock market investing, and as Orenstein likes to say, being "a fixer of anything and collector of everything."

Though his career was spent investing, Orenstein says that at heart, Dan was an artist.

"I think you could call him a Renaissance guy, with a multitude of interests," Orenstein said. "But, in everything he did, he was a very creative person. He was as creative with his Halloween costumes as he was with naming the goats and the geese that roamed his property. He had a great deal of creativity, in everything from his investing to his sculpture."

When he retired, Offutt said in an interview, "I liquidated my company and came out here thinking I was going to retire. I've always had a darkroom and workshop, and I got into welding. One thing led to another, and I collected a lot of metal, and started sculpting."

Dan was a creative child who grew up in Oakland, Maryland, where his family was prominent in banking, real estate, and retail. He served in the U.S. Army, where he received the Selective Service Medal for meritorious service. He then attended the University of Maryland and, in 1965, received his master's degree in business administration from Columbia University.

He worked in New York with E.F. Hutton, where he had considerable success until retiring in the early 1980s to Weston. Despite being retired, he continued to "dabble in stocks," amassing an impressive portfolio from his Connecticut farm. Dan's estate was a substantial one, and while he directed where a relatively small portion was to go, the remainder of the bequest decisions were left up to his trusted friend, Dick Orenstein.



Dick Orenstein, executor of the Daniel E. Offutt, III Charitable Trust.

## DANIEL E. OFFUTT, III CHARITABLE TRUST

At one point, Orenstein attended a luncheon on investing at Ringling College of Art and Design. What he learned at that luncheon was that he already had a strategy for Dan's estate, namely to go to Dan's community, those closest to him, and ask them where they felt contributions should be made. As a result, Orenstein made significant bequests in Dan's hometowns, and to organizations that reflected Dan's varied interests, including woodworking and sailing.

"When I learned about Ringling College, I knew the decision to underwrite the Wood Shop in the Richard and Barbara Basch Visual Arts Center was perfect. "I knew Dan would have loved that," Orenstein said. "Some of the money also went to student scholarships, which fit in nicely, since we were already supporting a variety of scholarships across the country."

"We are grateful that Ringling College and our students are now part of Daniel Offutt's legacy as an artist and philanthropist," Ringling College President Larry R. Thompson said. "As we continue on our path of becoming the world's pre-eminent art and design college, this generous gift helps ensure that the most talented young artists from around the globe have resources and facilities to develop into the creative leaders of the future."

Gifts from the Daniel E. Offutt, III Charitable Trust have gone to a variety of worthwhile causes around the world, helping countless people in a variety of different ways, such as the Ringling College of Art and Design students who are now honing their skills in the Daniel E. Offutt III Wood Shop. "Dan worked with wood and other found materials to create whimsical sculptures and functional art. I believe he would have taken great pleasure in supporting the education of future artists through scholarships to Ringling College, and through access to this top-notch makerspace that has been named in his honor," Orenstein said.

# A Legacy of Love and Giving

By Gayle Guynup  
Photo by Cliff Roles

Charles and Margery Barancik (Chuck and Margie), believed that a child's skin color and zip code should not influence their success any more than the dreams they have in their heart. It was that belief that led them to found the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation in 2014, with the goal of making a meaningful difference in the areas of education, humanitarian causes, arts and culture, the environment, and medical research in Sarasota and beyond. If you look around our community today, the impact of their philanthropy is profound and will be felt for many years to come.

Both Chuck and Margie were from Chicago. Chuck, a graduate of Northwestern University, was a CPA who after a few years spent the rest of his life purchasing and operating multiple manufacturing companies across the midwest. Margie attended Smith College, where she earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education and went on to earn her master's in deaf education from Columbia University. After becoming a mother of three, Margie focused on helping the underserved, particularly children and families.

"Chuck once said that it was seeing his children involved in various charitable activities that piqued his interest (in philanthropy)," said Teri A Hansen, president and CEO of Barancik Foundation. "Initially, Chuck and Margie would make many of their donations anonymously, but as they grew on in years, they became more involved and gave to those things about which they were passionate. And then they formed their private foundation. They hired me as the first employee on July 1, 2015, and we set out to create a framework and structure that would carry out their legacy after they were gone."

The Baranciks loved art, and had an extensive art and glass collection. However, in addition to being art aficionados, they were also passionate about children and education, so supporting Ringling College of Art and Design was a perfect fit.

"They both believed that it is education that changes the individual and the world," Hansen said.



Charles and Margery Barancik.

## CHARLES & MARGERY BARANCIK FOUNDATION

One of the Baranciks' first leadership gifts to Ringling College of Art and Design was a \$1 million grant to its Library of the Future campaign. The grant underwrote the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation Student Learning Center in the Alfred R. Goldstein Library, which opened in January of 2017. The Barancik Student Learning Center offers academic support services for all students, free of charge. Services include helping students with their classes, writing, software basics, studying, and developing skills such as organization, time management, and conversational English.

In the summer of 2018, the Baranciks once again put their generosity to work at Ringling College of Art and Design with a gift of \$1 million to establish a Ringling College Masterpiece Scholarship. These full-tuition scholarships are awarded for four years to exceptionally talented students, who also demonstrate significant financial need.

The first recipient of their scholarship was Matthew (Matt) Lupo, a Motion Design student who will be graduating this year (2022). Matt was one of two winners of last fall's Trustee Scholar award in Motion Design, the highest award given by each department. When nominated, Matt felt that since he had been fortunate enough

to receive the Masterpiece Scholarship, the Trustee Scholarship should go to another equally deserving student, "just as Chuck and Margie would have done."

The Baranciks and their Foundation have made numerous other donations to the College over the years, including being the annual presenting sponsor of Ringling's Avant-Garde, with additional support coming during the event's paddle raise for Crossing the Finish Line Scholarships. These Crossing the Finish Line Scholarships are awarded at the discretion of the president to deserving students facing financial difficulties. More recent gifts have included annual support for Free Second Sundays at SAM (Sarasota Art Museum), which enables access once a month to visitors who otherwise could not afford to visit, and funds which allowed the Museum to rehire Visitor Experience Associates (VEAs) during the pandemic, with a focus on hiring bilingual speakers.

While Hansen added that there were many things at Ringling College that impressed the Baranciks, nothing impressed them more than the students themselves—the quality of the students, the passion that they had for their work, and seeing how the entire College community worked together to help the students grow into the artists they were meant to be.



# ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

## Have news to share?

Send notes about new jobs and promotions, accolades, awards, exhibition, film screenings, even life milestones like marriages, babies, and retirements – whatever you would like to share!

Send your notes to: [alumni@ringling.edu](mailto:alumni@ringling.edu)

## THE FIFTIES

### 1958

**Neil Jansen**, Commercial Art, exhibited a solo show at the Beaufort Art Association Gallery from August-September 2021. Neil shared, "Over 100 patrons came through the gallery on opening night and 50 of my naïve art paintings flew off the walls!" Neil's studio is located in Bluffton, SC. [neiljansenart.com](http://neiljansenart.com)

## THE SIXTIES

### 1966

**Wendell Minor**, Commercial Design, released *Breaking Waves: Winslow Homer Paints the Sea*, written by Robert Burleigh, in June 2021 through Neal Porter Books/Holiday House. It was glowingly reviewed by both the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. Wendell had 3 additional titles released in 2021: *Crowbar* by Jean Craighead George, through HarperCollins; *The Leather Apron Club* by Jane Yolen, through Charlesbridge; and, *Wilbur Wright Meets Lady Liberty* by Robert Burleigh, through Henry Holt. [minorart.com](http://minorart.com)

### 1967

**William "Bill" Jameson**, Fine Arts, celebrated a milestone of 50 years of painting professionally in July 2021. He is represented by galleries from the Carolinas to California and is included in many museum permanent collections including The Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans. Bill continues to teach studio and plein air workshops in the U.S., Mexico, and Europe. [williamjameson.com](http://williamjameson.com)

## THE SEVENTIES

### 1970

**Shari Erickson**, Fine Arts, exhibited *Caribbean Charm* at Mango Tango Art Gallery on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands from April-May 2021. Shari and **Douglas Gifford '70**, Advertising Design, celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 2020. Shari now offers her tropical images on silk scarves from her studio in Western North Carolina and online. [islandstudio.com](http://islandstudio.com)

**Linda Hunsaker**, Fashion Design, exhibited in *Figurative Drawing & Painting* exhibit at Lore Gallery, Susquehanna University, PA, from November-December 2021, and in *Connect: Small Prints* with the Boston Printmakers at the Providence Art Club, Providence, RI, from March-April 2021. Linda is represented by the Watson MacRae Gallery in Sanibel, FL. [lindahunsaker.com](http://lindahunsaker.com) and [watsonmacraegallery.com](http://watsonmacraegallery.com)



Artwork by Paul Ladnier '70.

**Paul Ladnier**, Graphic Design and Illustration, and Professor Emeritus, UNF, Jacksonville, had four paintings accepted into the First Coast Plein Air Painters juried exhibition, *Scene Through Our Eyes*, at The Thrasher Horne Center for the Arts in September 2021, with his *The Blue Door* receiving the Best of Show award. Paul Ladnier Fine Art is located in Jacksonville, FL.

*Pals* by Shari Erickson '70.



**Catherine (Buck) Strange**, Interior Design, retired from Brigham Young University in January 2020 after 28 years as an interior design supervisor where she has designed or oversaw the design of every interior space on campus during her tenure. Catherine relocated to Myrtle Beach, SC in July 2021.

### 1971

**Gaylen "Frosty" Rankin**, Fine Arts, was awarded the 2021 Ron Billings Award for Professional Development by Arts for All Kentucky in April 2021. The Frosty Rankin Art Studio, Gallery & Print Shop is located in Millersburg, KY. [frostyartwork.com](http://frostyartwork.com)

### 1972

**Steven Miglio**, Advertising Design, exhibited new paintings at 2 Rivington, New York City, in November 2021. The exhibition was sponsored by Mickey Rolfe and The Sulzberger Rolfe Foundation and proceeds benefited the Southern Poverty Law Center's Election Protection Program.

### 1974

**Mark Henry**, Painting, exhibited in Preservation Through Art's *Along the French Broad* from September-October 2021, in Asheville, NC. In addition to his painting, pasteling, and drawing, Mark also designs and fabricates custom frames, and has traditional printing and block printing in his Weaverville studio. [markhenrylandscapes.com](http://markhenrylandscapes.com)



THE EIGHTIES

1982

**Brian Born**, Graphic Design, and Lynn Sarnow Born celebrated their 20<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in February 2022. The Borns reside in Dallas where their legacy, Zoe Born channels both their creativity as an award-winning high school art student. [cargocollective.com/brianborn](http://cargocollective.com/brianborn)

1983

**Mark Little**, Graphic Design, exhibited at Talley’s on Main Street in Mt. Airy, NC from May-December 2021. After 13 years serving North Carolina’s Piedmont, Mark closed his widely acclaimed Bib’s BBQ in the midst of COVID-19 and revived his painting studio, Art by Mark Little, in Winston-Salem.

1985

**Tom Chambers**, Graphic Design, won First Place for Outstanding Achievement, Fine Arts, for *Hide Your Eyes* by the International Color Awards in April 2021. New York Center for Photographic Art awarded him second place for *Blue Fox* in their Portals Contest, in October 2021. Tom is represented by Renaissance Fine Art in Baltimore; Merritt Gallery in Chevy Chase, MD; Merritt Gallery in Haverford, PA; Photo-eye Gallery, Santa Fe, NM; and, Gilman Contemporary, Sun Valley, ID. [tomchambersphoto.com](http://tomchambersphoto.com)

**David Lanier**, Illustration, had artwork *Portrait of a Boykin Spaniel* featured in *Fur, Feathers & Scales* in the April/May 2021 issue of *International Artist* magazine. David exhibited a solo show, *The Art of Nature*, at the Colquitt County Arts Center in Moultrie, GA, from January-February 2022. David is represented by Plantation Gallery in Albany, GA. [dlanier.com](http://dlanier.com)

**Michael James White**, Illustration, received the honor of designing his 40 year high school reunion T-shirt. Michael graduated from The Rock Hill High School in Rock Hill, SC. The reunion will be in conjunction with RHHS’ rival school Northwestern High School, therefore the design includes both the RHHS Bearcat alongside the Northwestern Trojan. [michaeljwhiteart.com](http://michaeljwhiteart.com)



Deborah Rodriguez: A Thousand Words exhibition at Ringling College.

1986

**Deborah Rodriguez**, Fine Arts, had photography included in the PBS publication, *American Portrait: The Story of Us, Told by Us*, in June 2021. Deborah also exhibited *Deborah Rodriguez: A Thousand Words* at Ringling College from August-December 2021. [deborahrodriguezart.com](http://deborahrodriguezart.com)

1988

**Danielle Glaysher**, Fine Arts, and her Inspired Art Solutions studio completed two commissions for the creation and installation of concrete and billet glass butterfly benches at Tidewell Hospice and Palliative Care’s Ellenton House in October 2021. She was commissioned after Tidewell Foundation saw her artwork at the City of Sarasota’s Ernest “Doc” and Eloise Werlin Park, where her first butterfly bench was installed in 2018. **FB: Inspired Art Solutions**

THE NINETIES

1990

**Leigh (Ricker) Kvetko**, Graphic Design, worked in broadcast design for over 20 years. She has launched 2 businesses: In 2017 the bar Las Almas Rotas, and in July 2020 her West of Here Studio, which specializes in design as well as printmaking and textile work. Both her businesses are located in Dallas. [lasalmasrotas.com](http://lasalmasrotas.com) and [Instagram: westofhere\\_studio](https://www.instagram.com/westofhere_studio)

1992

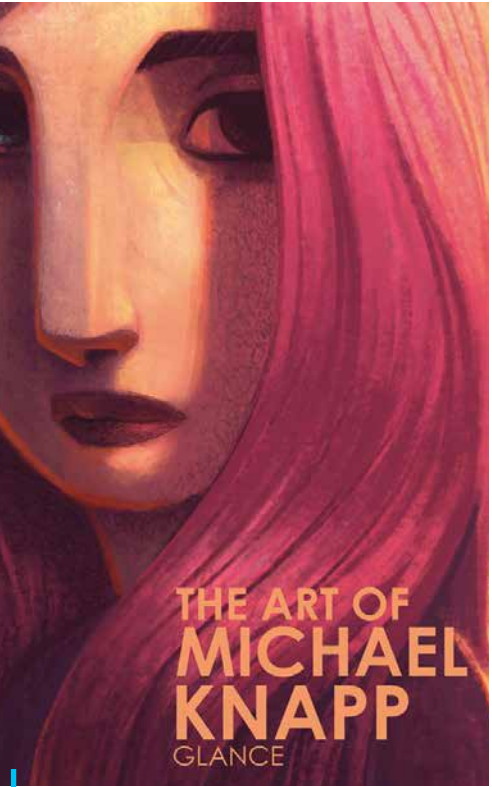
**Paul Aichele**, Computer Graphics, joined Disney Animation as a character technical director in April 2021. In his 21 years at Pixar, some of Paul’s credits included *Ratatouille*, *Monsters Inc.*, *Inside Out*, *Up*, *Toy Story 3*, *Brave*, and *Finding Nemo*.

**Matthew Hasty**, Fine Arts, was featured by the *Memphis Flyer* in *Mississippi River School: The Life and Art of Matthew Hasty*, in October 2021. He exhibited *The Illusion of Permanence*, a solo show at L Ross Gallery, Memphis, from October-November 2021. [lrossgallery.com/artists/matthew-hasty](http://lrossgallery.com/artists/matthew-hasty)

**Brent Sharkey**, Illustration, married Jamie Wilson in August 2021. They reside in Horseheads, NY, where Brent is owner of Sharkey Designs. [sharkeydesigns.com](http://sharkeydesigns.com)

1993

**Peggy Cross**, Interior Design, swiftly evolved into Feng Shui writing, teaching, consulting, and then into painting – artwork, including prints. In 2021, she was commissioned for paintings for the Tommy Bahama model home in Naples, opening in April 2022. The interior designer is **Carleen Young ’92**. For Peggy’s art as fabric and home goods, visit [spoonflower.com](http://spoonflower.com) and [peggycrossart.com](http://peggycrossart.com).



Book by Michael Knapp ’95.

1995

**Michael Knapp**, Illustration, currently works as a Visual Development Artist on both animated and live action projects. He previously served as a Production Designer and Art Director at Blue Sky Studios for over 20 years. In 2021, Mike released *Glance: The Art of Michael Knapp* through Ominiky Ediciones in June, and his first solo record, *Sink Until You Swim* in December. [michaelknapp.com](http://michaelknapp.com)

1996

**Jennifer (Arminio) Borresen**, Illustration, celebrated her 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with Gannett in September 2021. She was promoted to the *USA Today* graphics team as data visualization editor in June 2020 and is based in Sarasota. Jennifer and **Ron Borresen ’96**, Illustration, celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in March 2022.

**Ted Cormier-Leger**, Illustration, was elected Town Councilor in November 2021 in the town of Franklin, MA. He was recognized with two National Awards by Real Living Real Estate: Ruby Medallion Level (Top Sales Agent) and Five-Star Service (for receiving the highest marks from his customers) in April 2021. Ted resides in the Greater Boston area with his spouse Artie and their 2 boys. He continues to exhibit and sell his paintings at various shows throughout the year including a recent exhibit which celebrated diversity.

**Sue (Martino) Dufour** MPS, ATR-BC, Illustration, is currently in her 2<sup>nd</sup> year as president of the New Jersey Art Therapy Association, through January 2023. She had the honor to help write and craft the New Jersey Art Therapy License Bill, now signed into law as of 2016. It provides the first ever licensing and regulation at the state level of Art Therapists with the licenses of Professional Art Therapist (LPAT) and Associate Art Therapist (LAAT).

**Chie Fueki**, Fine Arts, was awarded an inaugural 2021 Joan Mitchell Fellowship in November 2021. She exhibited *Chie Fueki: You & I* at DC Moore Gallery, New York City, from January-February 2022, which was reviewed by John Yau on *Hyperallergic* and Johanna Fateman in *The New Yorker* magazine. She is represented by DC Moore Gallery and Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Los Angeles. [dcmooregallery.com](http://dcmooregallery.com) and [shoshanawayne.com](http://shoshanawayne.com)

1997

**Rebecca Perez Stodolny**, Computer Animation, animated characters on two major studio films, garnering multiple nominations and awards: *Encanto* for Golden Globe Best Animated Feature, and *Raya and the Last Dragon*, about which she was interviewed by NBC 6 Miami’s *6 In the Mix* in March 2021. [rebville.com](http://rebville.com)



Chie Fueki, *Josh (Energy Version (Solar Eclipse (Up Up Up)))*, 2021  
Acrylic and mixed media on mulberry paper on wood, 84 × 60 inches

Courtesy of the artist and DC Moore Gallery, New York.

1998

**Terry DeMaio**, Fine Arts, was featured with her uncle, Tom Goss, in the *Door County Pulse* for their 3D artwork and sculptures. Terry shared, “COVID really did change things up for all of us. I ended up going back to my roots. After sculpting toys commercially for over 10 years, I am appreciating sculpting from nature. Washington State has given me the best reference of nature.” Terry’s studio is in Redmond, WA.

**Misty (Bell) Stiers**, Illustration, has joined CitiBank as their SVP, director of Inclusive Design. Apollo Publishers released a second print of her book, *Witch, Please*, in October 2021 and is planning release of her second book, a cookbook, in late 2022/2023. [mistybellstiers.com](http://mistybellstiers.com)

1999

**Timothy Lawn**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, earned his master’s in defense and strategic studies from the University of Texas at El Paso 2020. He works as a visual multimedia designer for the United States Special Operations Command in Tampa.

**Brad Taylor and Laurel (McClure) Taylor**, both Illustration, relocated to Denver in June 2021 when Brad was appointed head of Game Art at Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design. Laurel teaches Graphic Design and Illustration at Riverdale Ridge High School.

**Frederick Weiss**, Photography and Digital Imaging, joined the Board of Directors of Ringling College Library Association in 2021. VP, Creative Director for Sangoma, Frederick also hosts two shows: *ThunderNerds.io* and *HowToBusiness.tv*. In these shows, Frederick talks with industry experts on topics from entrepreneurship, marketing, business strategy, design thinking, and an array of technology principles.



# Ralph E. Glaser, Jr. and the Importance of Legacy Giving

By Gayle Guynup | Portrait by Eric Forberger



Ralph E. Glaser, Jr. '58, Interior Design, and his partner Dr. John Pfeifer.

Ralph E. Glaser, Jr. was born and raised in Dayton, Ohio. After graduating from high school, Ralph worked at Rike's Department Store in its interior design department, and it was there that he first realized his life-long passion for residential and commercial interior design.

After serving in the Army during the Korean conflict, he returned home and attended the University of Dayton. He then continued his education at Ringling School of Art, where he earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in interior design in 1958.

"Ringling was a very small school back then," Ralph said. "I don't remember the actual number of buildings on campus, but my best recollection is maybe two or three, four at most. The graduating Class of 1958 was composed of 20 students across all the disciplines. We had only one instructor in our department, Bern Bullard, who taught the entire curriculum and supervised our development as young professionals. He was an absolute asset to the College and inspired me to pursue interior design as a career," he said.

The significance of his time at Ringling College is reflected in Ralph's decision to make a legacy gift. "I was the first person in my family to attend college. Thanks to the GI bill, I was able to go to Ringling and earn my degree. My partner of 42 years, John Pfeifer, and I wanted to make that experience a reality for other young people with similar financial needs. John received a fellowship to Northwestern University, and is making a contribution to his alma mater, as well," Ralph explained.

Ralph is quick to credit Ringling College for changing his life and helping him get his first design job. "Waldo Perez, the head of Burdines' interior design department in Miami came to Ringling several times a year to critique our work. Waldo offered me an internship as a junior designer in 1957. When I graduated, he hired me to design full-time and things took off from there."



Members of the Ringling School of Art graduating class of 1958. Courtesy of Ralph E. Glaser, Jr., shown top row, third from left.

Ralph worked at Burdines for seven years, and then, in 1969, moved to Vero Beach where he owned and operated Vero Beach Interiors, Inc., for more than 50 years. He earned an esteemed reputation for his classic designs, use of high-end fabrics, and ability to incorporate antiques, quality furniture, and upholstery into his work.

"While I enjoyed every minute of my career, the projects that are most memorable are the ones that required attention to historical perspectives and details. Early in my career, I had the honor to work on the restoration of Vizcaya, a well-known Italian Renaissance mansion in Miami. Similarly, my last project was the restoration of Westglow, a 1917 Colonial Revival mansion in Blowing Rock, NC. Both projects are now spaces enjoyed by the public: Vizcaya is a museum, and Westglow is a Relais & Châteaux resort and spa."

"I enjoyed a successful and fulfilling design career and I know I have Ringling College to thank for my start," Ralph said. "My hope for my legacy gift is that it will allow other talented, young creatives the same opportunities."

## THE AUGHTS

### 2000

**Christy (Works) Boutte**, Illustration, opened her second New Orleans gallery, Art by Christy, on Magazine Street in October 2021. Christy was also featured by *Inside New Orleans* in their December 2021-January 2022 issue. [artbychristy.com](http://artbychristy.com)

**John Hastings**, Illustration, joined Klick Health in New York City as VP, group creative director in April 2021. With 20 years' experience in art direction, John uses a mix of traditional art, tech, and filmmaking to create unique and memorable ideas, specializing in healthcare, while racing BMX in the New York metro area with his two children and a dog, Elsa.

### 2001

**Jennifer (Thompson) Naugle**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, married Mark Naugle in May 2021. Last year, Jen was excited to return to the Ringling College campus to photograph a promotion with the reality show *MTV Siesta Key*. Jen Naugle Photography specializes in branding photography and is located in Tampa. [jennauglephotography.com](http://jennauglephotography.com)

### 2002

**Jason Bereswill**, Illustration, exhibited in 2021: *Landscapes*, a group show at Raritan Valley Community College, NJ, from September-October; *Heat Wave*, at Room57 Gallery, New York City, in April; and, *Illusion & Abstraction: Capturing the Landscape*, at the Bermuda National Gallery in March. [jasonbereswill.com](http://jasonbereswill.com)

**Daniel DelPurgatorio**, Illustration, relocated to Dallas to join ATKPLN as executive creative director in January 2021. [delpurgatorio.com](http://delpurgatorio.com)

### 2003

**Olga (Muñoz) Herrera**, Illustration, announced that Feiwei and Friends, Macmillan had purchased world rights to her debut picture book, *The Unwelcome Surprise*, the publication of which is scheduled for Winter 2023. Olga is also the co-founder and co-host of *IlloChat*, a podcast for illustrators. [olgachildrensillustrator.com](http://olgachildrensillustrator.com) and [illochat.com](http://illochat.com)

**Lynn Riechmann**, Interior Design, joined The Hermitage Artist Retreat as Marketing and Communications manager in September 2021.

### 2004

**Tobey Albright**, Fine Arts, was recognized by the Society of Typographic Arts with "The 100 Best Examples of Typographic Excellence Produced Around the Globe 2021" for his website for the exhibition, *Both And*, which was organized by **Nicole Mauser '06**, Fine Arts, at Tiger Strikes Asteroid in Chicago. Tobey's HOUR Studio specializes in print, web, and environments. [bothand.art](http://bothand.art) and [hour.studio](http://hour.studio)

**Katherine Chase**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, celebrated her 10<sup>th</sup> year with The Weather Channel/IBM as lead product designer in 2021. Katherine, spouse Jessica, and son Emerson welcomed son Spencer in April 2021, and they reside in Hahira, GA.

**Eric Dolhon**, Illustration, earned his LL.M. (Master of Laws) in Taxation from the University of Florida Levin College of Law in May 2021. He is sitting for the Florida Bar Exam in February 2022 in Tampa. Eric, his spouse Sugeily, and their children reside in St. Cloud, FL.

**Jorge Lacera**, Illustration, relocated to Montreal to join Cloud Chamber Studios as art director on the next game in the *BioShock* series in January 2021. Through his Studio Lacera, he illustrated *XO, EXOPLANET*, written by Deborah Underwood and released by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers in November 2021. Both Jorge and his spouse Megan Lacera are represented by John Cusick at Folio Jr. Literary. [studiolacera.com](http://studiolacera.com)

**Jeff Miner**, Illustration, married Amanda Miner in September 2021. The couple resides in the greater Boston area where Jeff is a senior product manager at TJX.

### 2005

**Lowree (Cartwright) Tynes**, Interior Design, was named to *The NYC Journal's* 2021 list of "Top 30 Women Disruptors" in November 2021. She was recognized by the Caribbean Property Awards for Best Residential Interior Design/Private Residence, Bahamas for *Noah's Ark* in February 2022. Lowree, her spouse Daynan Tynes, and their two children, Leighton and Soleil, reside in Nassau, The Bahamas. Lowree Tynes Design (LTD), offers both residential and commercial design services. [lowreetynesdesign.com](http://lowreetynesdesign.com)

### 2006

**Mona Bagla**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, launched Rays of Colours Design Studio, Mumbai, India, in November 2021. [monabagla.com](http://monabagla.com)

**Marques Cannon**, Illustration, married **Megan Capo '11**, Interior Design, in October 2018. They reside in Washington, D.C., where Marques is a UX designer with Publicis Sapient and Megan leads her interior design studio, Cuhpoe. [uxcannon.com](http://uxcannon.com) and [cuhpoe.com](http://cuhpoe.com)

**Guillermo Careaga**, Computer Animation, was character lead on *Boss Baby: Family Business*, released in July 2021. Guillermo celebrated his 15<sup>th</sup> year with DreamWorks in June 2021. He's currently working on *Meet The Gillmans* as an animation supervisor, while helping to boost the animation industry in Paraguay, his home country, through the organization Paraguay Animation. [paraguayanimation.com](http://paraguayanimation.com)

**Shanna De Iuliis**, Fine Arts, joined Overmatch in Los Angeles as a senior product manager in January 2021.

Interior design by Cuhpoe Studio, lead by Megan Capo '11.





**Tatiana Flis**, Fine Arts, joined the Hopkinton Center for the Arts in Massachusetts as director of programming in January 2022. [tatianafilis.com](http://tatianafilis.com)

**Elsa (Chaves) Lang**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, and spouse **Tyler Lang '07**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, relocated to Tyler's home state of Vermont in May 2021. For over a decade they've run their creative studio Always With Honor and are excited to be back on the East Coast reconnecting with family and exploring the green mountain state. [alwayswithhonor.com](http://alwayswithhonor.com)  
**Instagram:** [alwayswithhonor](#)

**Nicole Mauser**, Fine Arts, exhibited in the group show *Tiger Strikes Asteroid: It feels like the first time* at Mana Contemporary, Chicago, from May-September 2021. Nicole was a 2021 Latitude Artist In Residence. She organized the exhibition, *Both And*, on-view from October-December 2021 at Tiger Strikes Asteroid in Chicago. Nicole is co-founder of Space and Time Gallery. [spaceandtimegallery.com](http://spaceandtimegallery.com) and [nicolemauser.com](http://nicolemauser.com)

**Brooke Olivares-Caloiaro**, Illustration, and spouse **Matteo Caloiaro '07**, Illustration, welcomed their second child, Santino, in May 2021. Along with daughter, Sofia, the Caloiaros



Lindsey and Nana by Brooke Olivares-Caloiaro '06.

reside in Sarasota where Matteo teaches Illustration as full-time faculty at Ringling College and Brooke returned to her studio practice after teaching at Ringling College for 10 years. Matteo received two 5<sup>th</sup> place awards from The Portrait Society of America, Members Only Competition 2020. Matteo is launching a surf clothing brand, Santino Surf Designs, in 2022. [brookeolivaresfineart.com](http://brookeolivaresfineart.com) and [caloiaro.com](http://caloiaro.com)

**Shawn Witt**, Illustration, spouse **Kristin Palach Witt '09**, Computer Animation, and their two children relocated to Saitama, Japan in September 2021. Shawn is an illustration, concept, and character artist while Kristin is teaching high school English through he JET program, while they feed their creativity and take it all in, while immersed in another culture. [artstation.com/kristinpalach](http://artstation.com/kristinpalach) and [artstation.com/shawnwitt](http://artstation.com/shawnwitt)

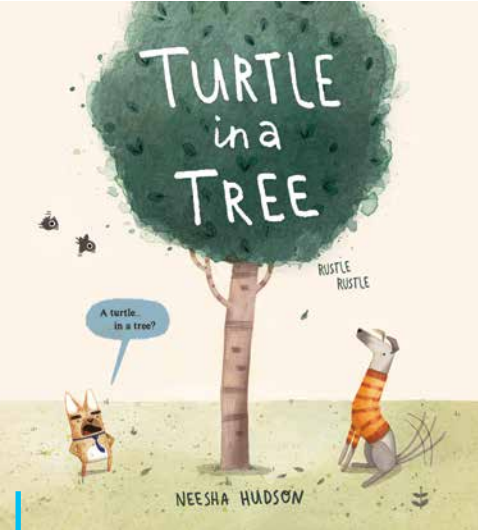
## 2007

**Heather DeSerio**, Fine Arts, joined Google, Inc. as a contract manager in August 2021. She is a New York licensed attorney that works in technology, entertainment, art, and IP law. Feel free to check out a few of her published articles: *Estate Planning for Artists* and *WWYH: Eyes on NYC's Department of Cultural Affairs' and Changing Policies*, both on the Center for Art Law website: [itsartlaw.org](http://itsartlaw.org)

**Kristi Wisner**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, married Athena Maroulis in October 2021. Kristi is a senior UX designer for Amazon in New York City. [kristiwisner.com](http://kristiwisner.com)

## 2008

**Alex Evans**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, and Marcus Hopkins married in a small Grand Teton National Park wedding in August 2021. They live in Portland, OR, where Alex is a founding member of Reef.ai, an emerging CS platform.



Book by Neesha (Hunter) Hudson '08

**Neesha (Hunter) Hudson**, Illustration, released her debut picture book, *Turtle in a Tree*, through Dial Books/Penguin/Random House in June 2021. [neeshahudson.com](http://neeshahudson.com)

**AJ Lome**, Illustration, married Jessica Lome in June 2019. They relocated to Big Bend, WI, in 2021 where AJ is a freelance illustrator. [ajillustration.com](http://ajillustration.com)

**Arianne Wack**, Fine Arts, received her MA in Cultural Reporting and Criticism from NYU in 2013. For the past eight years she has worked at the two-time, Peabody award-winning public radio show and podcast *Radiolab*, produced and distributed by WNYC. At Radiolab she combines her many skill sets as a technical producer, working under the director of Sound Design to edit and produce the weekly broadcast shows, as well as doing the mix on the podcasts. She still paints in her free time, and has recently started exhibiting her work. [awackart.com](http://awackart.com)



School's Out for Covid by Arianne Wack '08.

## 2009

**Lauren (Leffingwell) Albers**, Illustration, was promoted to department manager at Disney Animation in February 2021. Lauren oversees talent management and workforce planning of artistic, technical, and production talent for the studio's animators, crowds department, and 2D department.

**Sorcha Augustine**, Photography and Digital Imaging, exhibited in *Capturing the Ephemeral*, a dance photography exhibition showcasing the incredible artistry of photographers and dancers at Creative Pinellas in Largo, FL, from September-October 2021. She also joined Miano Academy of Art as associate director in December 2021. With a sprung floor in her Sarasota studio, Sorcha Augustine Photography specializes in dance and theatrical photography. [sorchaaugustine.com](http://sorchaaugustine.com)

**Lindsey Gilbert**, Illustration, married Colton Stickney in April 2021. Lindsey joined Titmouse Studios as a coordinator in July 2020, and is finishing up her stop motion animated short *Galactic Misfits* in Portland, OR. **Instagram:** [lindseymakerofthings](http://lindseymakerofthings)

**Lindsey Olivares**, Computer Animation, was named to *Variety's* "10 Animators to Watch List" in October 2021. Lindsey was production designer and lead character designer on Sony Pictures Animation's original animated comedy *The Mitchells Vs. The Machines*, which debuted in April 2021 at #1 on Netflix's U.S. most popular feature films, remaining in the top 3 for most of May and becoming Netflix's most successful new release in 2021. Olivares was nominated for Best Production Design in an animated feature at the Art Directors Guild Awards, and won best character design and best production design at the Annies. *Mitchells* has won Best Animated Film from 30 critics groups, including the Critics Choice awards and the Annies, and was nominated for an Oscar for Best Animated Feature 2022. [lindseyolivares.com](http://lindseyolivares.com)



Photograph by Sorcha Augustine '09, *The Dancers of Sarasota Contemporary Dance*: Melissa Coleman Sperber, Charlotte Johnson, Natalie Elizabeth, and Melissa Rummel.

## THE TWENTY TENS

## 2010

**Melanie (Ratcliff) Blank**, Photography and Digital Imaging, and spouse Nick welcomed their first child, Harper Jane Blank, in November 2021. The Blanks reside in Seeley Lake, MT where they are sole owners of Blank Powersports and founding partners of Dancing Goat Gardens Medical Cannabis Dispensary.

**David Serna**, Illustration, was awarded a 2021 regional Lone Star Emmy in Entertainment – Short or Long Form Content for his work as an editor on *Duo Inspirador De Artistas Locales*. David is a creative services producer for Univision Communications in Houston. [davidserna.net](http://davidserna.net)

**Aislinn Stone**, Fine Arts, earned Master's degrees in nonprofit management and in public administration from University of Central Florida in May 2021. After 3 years as Cultural Affairs Officer for Hillsborough County's Economic Development team, Aislinn joined Visit Tampa Bay as director of Partner Development in January 2022.

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# Alumni Astound

By Abby Weingarten

Illuminating the accomplishments of Ringling College graduates has been an annual joy among the campus community for the past five years.

On January 21, the Alumni Honor Wall—a tribute to those who have made significant impacts in their fields—was enriched with 12 new names. Ringling College President Dr. Larry R. Thompson led the induction ceremony in the Patricia Thompson Alumni and Skylight Galleries of the Keating Center, where the Honor Wall (designed in 2018 by Jeff Bleitz) is displayed.

“We have so many amazing alumni from different fields who are doing incredible things, and this is such a great opportunity to honor them,” said Susan Borozan, Ringling’s director of Alumni Relations and Engagement.

This year’s honorees span the spectrum of industries.

**Tandeka Lauriciano ’15, Advertising Design**, is a content designer for Meta in London, England. She has won awards from Cannes Lions and the ADC for her work on *Call of Duty*.

**Taylor Reed ’12, Business of Art and Design**, is a marketing specialist at Sunnys05 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She was previously on marketing teams for Meow Wolf and MNTN.

**Wayland Moore ’57, Commercial Design**, is a designer, poet, and educator who has painted the Kentucky Derby and the Super Bowl, and has exhibited 20-plus solo shows worldwide.

**Michael Yates ’14, Computer Animation**, is a director at Pixar Animation Studios. He is working on the upcoming series *Win or Lose*, and his credits include *Cars 3*, *Toy Story 4*, and *Soul*.

**Tony Ahedo ’15, Film**, is a director and producer at Pretty Sweet Films in Los Angeles, California. He made his directorial feature debut in 2021 with his independent film, *ICON*.

**Griffin Goodman ’17, Fine Arts**, lives and works in Chicago, Illinois. He recently held a solo exhibition at Andrew Rafacz Gallery, and he has upcoming shows in England and Australia.

**Kevin Whitmeyer ’16, Game Art**, is a senior environment artist at Bungie (video game development). An athlete and explorer, he specializes in creating grand landscapes and scenery.

**Thomas Pregiato ’11, Graphic Design**, is a brand creative director at Nike. An anti-disciplinary creative, he builds worlds for top-level brands, platforms, athletes, and musicians.

“My experience at Ringling shaped me greatly as an artist and maybe even more as a person. Being on the Alumni Honor Wall is such a privilege, for which I am so grateful.”  
Iggy Smalls ’15, Photography and Imaging

**Carlos Villagra ’06, Illustration**, is head of creative at Cloudco Entertainment. He leads projects like *Care Bears: Unlock the Magic*, and collaborates with partners on apparel and collectibles.

**Dustin Seager ’05, Interior Design**, is an associate/senior designer at Gensler in Tampa, Florida. A craftsman of experiential moments, he specializes in digital design and community building.

**Mauroof Ahmed ’13, Motion Design**, is a lead product designer for media at LinkedIn. He leads a design team that crafts simple, intuitive products for more than 740 million members.

**Iggy Smalls ’15, Photography and Imaging**, is based in Barcelona, and her images have been featured worldwide by *The British Journal of Photography*, *AI-AP*, *Adobe*, and *Refinery29*.

## 2011

**Chelsea (Clifford) Pacchiana**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, married Caitlin Pacchiana in August 2021. They reside in Gaylordsville, CT. Chelsea was promoted to senior graphic designer at Stamford Health in Stamford in January 2022.  
**chelsea-clifford.com**

**Trang Dang**, Interior Design, and spouse **Kumi Xiong ’11**, Illustration, welcomed their first child, Mina Rey, September 2021. They reside in Denver. As of January 2022, Trang works remotely for Angela Rodriguez Interiors as senior interior design associate, and Kumi is celebrating his 5<sup>th</sup> year as head of Digital Sculpt at Kidrobot. **Instagram: squared.bear**

**Matthew Holler**, Photography and Digital Imaging, rebranded his business to Matthew Holler Creative, and is now represented by Erik Quigley/Uncommon Talent since July 2021.  
**matthewholler.com**

**Chelsea Hunter**, Graphic Design, had her design of the Kate Albus book cover, *A Place to Hang the Moon*, selected as one of “30 of the Best Book Covers of the Year (So Far)” by *Print Magazine* in April 2021. She designed Tia Mowry’s cookbook *The Quick Fix Kitchen* released in September 2021. Chelsea joined Abrams Books as a senior designer in June 2021 where she designed the upcoming release, *Alex Aster’s Lightlark*. **seehunters.com**

**Therese Mcphersen**, Fine Arts, and partner Ricardo Burneo welcomed their first child, Oliver, in August 2021. Therese joined Electric Monster in Los Angeles as a post-production supervisor in December 2021 and received a promotion in February 2022 to creative director of Kids and Family Programming.  
**theresemcpherson.com**

**Robert Showalter**, Computer Animation, relocated to Portland, OR, at the end of 2019. Robert was an executive producer and pipeline supervisor for the **Uri Lotan ’12**, Computer Animation, animated short, *Black Slide*. He has continued to work on *StoryBots* for Netflix Animation. **vimeo.com/robshow**

**Athena Torri**, Photography and Digital Imaging, married Antonia Maeck in July 2021. They reside in Beacon, NY. Athena exhibited in *What I know to be true, and other encounters*, at PhotoAccess, Canberra, Australia in December 2021. **athenatorri.com**

**Gerard Zengel**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, joined Justworks.com as senior advertising director in July 2021. Gerard had served for five years as art director at Primary.com, both in New York City.  
**gerardzengel.com**



Photography by Matthew Holler ’11.

## 2012

**Katie Gibbs**, Illustration, celebrated her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with Disney Imagineering in June 2021. Katie is a lead artisan color designer for the Magic Kingdom, Orlando. Recent accomplishments include full-design and field art direction on the exterior facade and interior load/unload showsets at the legacy attraction, It’s A Small World. She also worked closely with a team to complete enhancements to the Jungle Cruise, which included fabrication of new show scenes to update the attraction for relevancy. She resides in Oakland, FL with her son, Theo.

**Emily Gillis**, Graphic and Interactive Communication, launched two businesses in 2021: Em & Me, for pet and party accessories, and Wisher Vodka, a woman-owned and produced vodka distilled from beets and the first and only craft spirit of the Metaverse.  
**emandmestudio.com and wishervodka.com**

**Lillian Gottwald**, Illustration, was promoted to art director at Nobrow and Flying Eye Books in London in March 2021.  
**Instagram: lillygottwald**



Book cover designs by Lillian Gottwald ’12.

**Adam Hartlaub**, Illustration, joined Vanguard’s B2B Financial Advisor Services group as senior UX designer in October 2021. Adam is married to Becky, who is also an artist, and they have a 2-year-old son, Theo.

**Nick Morgulis**, Digital Filmmaking, and his spouse, Sara welcomed their first child, Hunter Nicholas Morgulis, in August 2021. Nick is an Emmy award-winning cinematographer, director, and producer residing in Brooklyn, NY. His latest film as producer and director of Photography, *Lady of the Manor*, starring Melanie Lynskey and Judy Greer, was released in theaters nationwide by Lionsgate in September 2021, and is now available on Amazon Prime. Nick led a team that included **Ringling College 2018 Film grads Austin Zveare and Brandon Richards** as 1<sup>st</sup> camera assistants and **Nick Della Russo** as a 2<sup>nd</sup> camera assistant. Nick’s next major film will be released in early 2023.

**Grace Sigona**, Interior Design, married Matthew Griffin in January 2019. Grace is a project interior designer for Hunton Brady Architects in Orlando.

**Alex Terry**, Advertising Design, was promoted to associate creative director at Walgreens, based in Chicago, in January 2022.  
**whoisalexander.com**

**Charles Valsechi**, Illustration, earned his master’s in concept art for games & animation from Teesside University in September 2021. Charles co-founded Hyphae Game Studio in 2020. He resides in Richmond and teaches art at Virginia Commonwealth University and Rocky Mountain College of Art & Design, after relocating back to the US from Germany at the start of this year. **charlesvalsechi.com**



**Natalie Andrewson**, Illustration, served as the juror for the 16<sup>th</sup> annual *ILLest of ILL* in October 2021. Natalie held workshops and demos on campus for this annual illustration celebration. Natalie is an illustrator in Glendale, CA.  
**[natalie-andrewson.com](http://natalie-andrewson.com)**

**Clare Carrellas**, Motion Design, was responsible for illustrating and animating 3 stories within *In The Water Behind The Lens* by director Johnny Gonzales. This documentary film about surfer photography was screened at the Sarasota Film Festival in May 2021 and went on to win at other festivals. Clare is a freelance motion designer and illustrator. [\*\*clarecarrellas.com\*\*](http://clarecarrellas.com)

**Kevin Herron**, Computer Animation, was an animator on Oscar-nominated Sony Pictures Imageworks' *The Mitchells vs. The Machines*, Cinesite's *Addams Family 2*, and ReelFX's *Rumble*. Now he is a supervising animator on Netflix's *Dragon Prince* at Bardel Entertainment. He is based in Vancouver, BC.

**Samantha (Temkin) Jacob**, Advertising Design, married Kyle Jacob in October 2019. They reside in San Diego where Samantha was promoted to senior UX designer at Sharp HealthCare in June 2020. **[samanthajacob.com](http://samanthajacob.com)**



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**Gracie Kennedy**, Illustration, launched her new business, TeeLaine, offering a full spectrum of creative director's abilities, from brand design and print materials to swag production and custom apparel decoration, located in Dallas, in September 2021.

**teelaine.com**

**Esther Love**, Game Art, joined Robot Entertainment in Seattle as a senior environment artist in May 2021.

**Colt Sammons**, Interior Design, had his project for Universal Creative, “SUPER NINTENDO WORLD” in Osaka, Japan, launch in February 2021. Colt was a show set designer for the land’s “E-ticket” attraction Mario Kart Koopa’s Challenge.

**Diana Castillo ’14**, Illustration, was also assigned the overall project. The project won two awards at the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Thea Awards, for “Outstanding Achievement: Mario Kart Augmented Reality Themed Ride Technology (Technical Innovation)” and “Super Nintendo World (Theme Park Land).”

**coltsammons.com**

**Bryan Shannon** and **Molly Warner '14**, both Game Art and Design, married in September 2021 in a video game-themed wedding. Together they are environment artists with Certain Affinity in Austin, as well as on their own indie game. **bryan3d.com** and **mollywarner.com**

**Shannon Soule**, Photography and Digital Imaging, joined BuzzFeed as a staff photographer in October 2019. She is now based in Los Angeles after having relocated from NYC in 2018. Some of her recent clients include Estée Lauder, Toyota, Pepsi, Amazon, Hydroflask, PayPal, and Conair.

**shannonsoule.com**

**Tyrell Waiters**, Illustration, married Jessica LeClerc in April 2021. They relocated from Seattle to New Hampshire in December 2021, where Tyrell is a freelance illustrator. Recent clients include Bath and Body Works where he designed their first-ever Black History Month candle collection. [tartwurk.com](http://tartwurk.com)

**Marisabel Fernandez**, Motion Design, was promoted to head of PMO, UX and Research Programs at Robinhood, an online trading platform, in January 2022. Marisa relocated to Seattle in November 2021.

**Nicole Gutzmann**, Motion Design, has been working as a VFX coordinator for Cantina Creative since April 2020 on projects for Interactive Theme Park Experience Design, working on ambitious, innovative content for an industry-leading vendor.

**Idmary Hernandez**, Illustration, relocated to Perth, Australia in August 2021. She is the manager of Frida's Sip 'n' Paint Studios where she also teaches painting. Idmary continues to sell her prints all around Barcelona and online on Etsy.  
**Instagram: [idmaryhernandez.art](https://www.instagram.com/idmaryhernandez.art)**

**Shannon McClernan**, Illustration, joined Universal Studios Orlando in March 2021 initially as a scenic painter for the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, and now paints throughout the park. As scenic charge, she painted a giant golden record for the 2021 National Tour of The Buddy Holly Story. Shannon resides in Orlando with her fiancé, a myriad of plants, unicycles, a sailboat, musical instruments, and a cat named Phil.

**[behance.net/shannonmcclernan](https://behance.net/shannonmcclernan)**

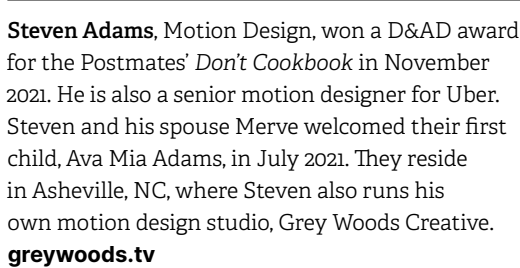
**Alexandra Tibbe**, Business of Art and Design, had several films released in 2021 including *Zola*, *Fear of Rain*, and *Lady of the Manor*, and also completed four films which will be released in 2022. Alexandra also received a full-name shout-out and thank you by director Justin Long on the *Today Show*.  
**[alexandra-tibbe.squarespace.com](http://alexandra-tibbe.squarespace.com)**

**Margaret (McCoy) Woods**, Photography and Digital Imaging, joined Universal Orlando Resort as manager of Creative Assets in April 2021. Maggie and her spouse **Chaz Woods '12**, Graphic Design, adopted their first dog, Ellie, in 2021 and reside in the greater Orlando area, where Chaz is a digital designer for Universal Orlando.

**[margaretdphoto.com](http://margaretdphoto.com) and [clockworkdesign.net](http://clockworkdesign.net)**

**Michael Yates**, Computer Animation, is currently writing and directing on Pixar's *Win or Lose*, set to be released in 2023. **Instagram:** [yyates05](#)

Multiple alumni are working on the upcoming Pixar series *Win or Lose*.



**Tony Ahedo**, Film, directed his feature film *ICON*, which screened at Sarasota Film Festival in May 2021, and was the closing feature of the Florida Film Festival in Orlando in April 2021. Filmed in St. Petersburg, Tony's production team included **Harrison Stagner '15**, **Nichole Fernandez '16**, **Jeremy Teran '18**, **Aaron Kinsey '15**, **Jeff Boos '14**, **Brandon Richards '18**, **Chandler Howard '17**, **Nick Lennon '15**, **Benny Davis '16**, **Jake Wojenski '17**, **Zifeng Zhuo '18**, and **Wingel Buendia '13**. Tony's production company, Pretty Sweet Films, is located in Los Angeles. *ICON* is slated to release in fall of 2022. [iconfeature.com](http://iconfeature.com)

**Andy Passchier**, Illustration, in collaboration as an illustrator with children's writer Katherine Locke, released *What are Your Words?* in May 2021 by Little, Brown & Company. Andy also illustrated *Being You: A First Conversation About Gender*, in collaboration with writers Megan Madison and Jessica Ralli, released by Penguin RISE in August 2021. Andy mentors for We Need Diverse Books whose mission is to create a world in which all children can see themselves in the pages of a book.

**annepasschier.com**

**Kyle Beckett**, Illustration, and **Lauren Sobczak** '16, Film, were married in June 2021 in Sarasota. They reside in Atlanta where Kyle is represented by The Bright Agency and Lauren is in production for film and television, having just finished work on the final season of *Ozark* on Netflix.

**[kbeckett393.wixsite.com/illustration](mailto:kbeckett393.wixsite.com/illustration)**

**Mary Cassin**, Game Art, was promoted to senior technical artist at DeepMind in London in November 2021. She also was co-host of the Technical Artist Summit at GDC 2022.

**Christina (Schucht) Maksoud**, Motion Design, was elected president of AAF Suncoast, Sarasota's chapter of the American Advertising Federation, in June 2021. Christina served on the board of directors' executive committee as communications chair from 2020-2021. Christina was also recognized in *Sarasota SCENE Magazine* as one of the "Women on the Scene," a 2021 issue highlighting women business owners in Sarasota. She was also recently asked to be a part of the Telly Awards Judging Council. With spouse **Karim Maksoud '15**, Motion Design, their business, MakSchu Productions, focuses on building video and graphic content marketing in the Tampa Bay region. **MakSchu.com**



**Ally Sage**, Business of Art and Design, joined Marvel Animation as a production coordinator in September 2021.

**Nathaniel Turner**, Film, is a Los Angeles video editor with Scale Media. Outside of work, he writes novels, screenplays, and short films. His latest film, *Red: A Fairy Tale*, won 15 awards from five film festivals in 2020. He was featured on *Voyage LA* in July 2021. **nathanielallenturner.com**

**Bob Yong**, Computer Animation, earned his master's of fine arts in animation from University of Southern California in May 2020. Bob was promoted to learning & development trainer at The Third Floor in Los Angeles in February 2022. Bob also teaches as part-time Animation & Visual Effects faculty at the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts, Chapman University. **bobyong.com**

## 2017

**Esteban Bravo**, Computer Animation, joined Pixar Animation Studios as a story artist in April 2021. He is currently storyboarding on Pixar's first original series, *Win Or Lose*, scheduled for release in 2023. **Instagram: estebravo**

**Christian Huthmacher**, **Hannah Segraves '18**, and **Livia Lenhoff '19**, all Motion Design, were awarded Emmys for their contribution to Nickelodeon's coverage of the January 2021 NFC Wildcard Game in June 2021. Christian, Hannah, and Livia are motion designers with Nickelodeon in New York City. **christianhuthmacher.com**, **hannahsegraves.com**, **livialenhoff.com**

**Puja Kolluru**, Film, collaborated with filmmaker Venkatesh Maha to create Write Right Club (WRC), a forum that encourages different formats of creative writing through screenwriting workshops in India. WRC was featured in *The Hindu* in August 2021. Puja is based in Hyderabad, India. **vimeo.com/pujakolluru**

**Samantha McIntosh**, Illustration, joined Ringling College as an admissions counselor in July 2021. Prior to returning to Sarasota, Sam was part of the opening team for the Star Wars Galaxy's Edge at Disneyland in Southern California.

**Natalie Palumbo**, Motion Design, joined The Nielsen Company in New York City as a motion designer in August 2021. **natalieapalumbo.com**

## 2018

**Fay Han**, Illustration, was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in November 2020. She married Rio Sperschneider in January 2022, and they reside with their two pet rabbits in Sugar Land, TX, where Fay is in her third year teaching art in the Fort Bend Independent School District. **Instagram: mshansartclass**

**Keishen Lloyd**, Film, was recognized by *Visions of the Black Experience*, a film festival devoted to celebrating the historic, social, and cultural aspects of Black life through film, with their Emerging Filmmaker Scholarship in New College of Florida's waterfront ceremony in January 2022. In addition to Keishen's filmmaking, he is an assistant editor for *This Old House*. **keishenlloyd.com**

## 2019

**Leslie Carol**, Graphic Design, joined VSA Partners as a designer in April 2021. Leslie and **Martin Pohlmann '20**, Graphic Design, married in February 2022. They reside in Chicago where Martin is a designer with Ogilvy. **lesliecarol.design** and **pohlmann.design**

**Markelle Charleston**, Illustration, married Michael Robelo in January 2020. They reside in their first home in Alachua, FL, where Markelle works in her church's design department, helping create content for events and merchandise. She also freelances, specializing in logos and illustrations. **curleeq24.wixsite.com/markellecharleston**

**Savannah Magnolia**, Fine Arts, was invited to exhibit in the *Dali Dozen*, 12 local emerging artists presenting work at the Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg and completed a commission for Moffitt Cancer Research Center in December 2021. Savannah's studio is based in Tampa. **meltingmagnolia.com**

**Jessica Pope**, Visual Studies, joined Ringling College as adjunct Liberal Arts Faculty in August 2021. Jess earned her master's of fine art in visual art from Vermont College of Fine Arts in May 2021. Jess also is operations manager with the Urbanite Theatre in Sarasota and has performed with Moving Ethos Dance Theatre Company since 2008. **jpopedesign.com**

**Rubén F. Román García**, Film, earned a master's of art in international peace studies with a specialization in media, peace and conflict studies from The United Nations Mandated University for Peace (San José, Costa Rica) in June 2021. **Instagram: ruben.fromang**

**Leslie Simmons**, Illustration, relocated from Rhode Island to Tempe, AZ, in September 2021 to join McFarlane Toys as a 3D digital and prototype painter. **lesliesimmonsart.wixsite.com/portfolio**

## THE TWENTY-TWENTIES

## 2020

**Gizem Atalay**, Motion Design, was promoted to motion designer at Zealot in Los Angeles in November 2021. **gizematalay.com**

**Mengyuan “Cherry” Guo**, **Suhn Young Chung**, and **Naicheng Liu**, all Computer Animation, were awarded Best Animation at the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Palm Beaches Student Showcase of Films, Florida's largest student film competition, in June 2021 for their thesis *Tricked*. Cherry and Naicheng are studying in USC's MFA Animation & Digital Art program, while Suhn is animating in South Korea. **mcherryguo.com**, **suhn.creatorlink.net**, **naichengliu.com**

**Allana Luihn**, Photography and Imaging, earned a master's of professional studies in fashion photography from School of Visual Arts in May 2022. Alli is based in Brooklyn, NY; Cary, NC; and Miami, FL. **alliluihn.com**

**Austin Ventola**, Illustration, joined Modern Campus as a designer and visual creative in February 2021. Austin released his first book, *Geometrica*, which involves his passion for math and science through graphic design and illustration, in October 2021.

**Jarod Reizian**, Game Art, was promoted to associate VFX artist at Raven/Activision in February 2022. Since joining in August 2020, Jarod's credits include *Call of Duty: Cold War* and *Vanguard*. In these games he worked on environmental effects, execution moves, and other visual effects for games. **artstation.com/jarodreizian**

**Inka Schulz**, Illustration, joined Blizzard Entertainment as a Concept Art Outsource Supervisor on *Diablo 4* in February 2022. Inka is based in Frisco, TX. **penandinka.com** **Instagram: Inkasprout**

## 2021

**Kitt Thomas**, Visual Studies, reached the top of *The New York Times* Best Seller's List (Children's) for their collaboration illustrating Stacey Abrams' picture book, *Stacey's Extraordinary Words*, in January 2022. The book also won the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work (Children's) in February 2022. **kitt-thomas.carrd.co**

# In Memoriam

**1941**  
**Gilbert Eugene Lamboley**  
Painting and Drawing  
November 13, 2020, Clearwater, Florida

**Phyllis (Mewin) Owen**  
Commercial Design  
April 6, 2021, Durham, North Carolina

**1949**  
**Mary Spotswood “Spot” (Baskervill) Crenshaw**  
Fine Arts  
October 31, 2020, Richmond, Virginia

**1951**  
**James T. “JT” Glisson, Jr.**  
Advertising Design  
April 25, 2019, Evinston, Florida

**1953**  
**Richard Carr Peters**  
Interior Design  
January 17, 2021, Sonoma, California

**1956**  
**Marjorie Janet (Weier) Kellams**  
Fashion Design  
January 3, 2022, Pensacola, Florida

**Patricia Ann “Pat” Pendleton**  
Fine Arts  
March 9, 2021, Lakewood, Colorado

**1957**  
**James C. “Jim” Ellis**  
Commercial Design  
May 11, 2016, Roanoke, Virginia

**Stephen Lloyd “Steve” Galit**  
Commercial Design  
October 20, 2021, Matthews, North Carolina

**1958**  
**Joseph Leslie “Jim” Pugh, III**  
Commercial Design  
April 11, 2021, Benicia, California

**1959**  
**William Frank Morton**  
Fine Arts  
February 8, 2021, Oakland, Maine

**James F. “Jimmy” Neal**  
Fine Arts  
March 5, 2021, Sarasota, Florida

**William Edward “Bill” Puckett**  
Commercial Design  
May 27, 2021, St. Augustine, Florida

**Ronald Maburn “Ron” Rice**  
Commercial Design  
March 15, 2021, Shreveport, Louisiana

**Andre Bruce Ward**  
Fashion Design  
February 15, 2022, Memphis, Tennessee

**1960**  
**John Walter Fisher**  
Illustration  
January 20, 2022, Greeneville, Tennessee

**Roland Nissley**  
Interior Design  
July 27, 2021, Litchfield Park, Arizona

**Jerry Dean Rabb**  
Commercial Design  
April 18, 2020, Shelby, North Carolina

**1961**  
**Joseph Morton Mallison**  
Interior Design  
October 9, 2021, Hickory, North Carolina

**1962**  
**James V. “Buddy” Buntin**  
Commercial Design  
March 11, 2020, Tuscaloosa, Alabama

**Nancie Evelyn (Law) Henry**  
Fashion Design  
November 9, 2019, Maryville, Tennessee

**1963**  
**Dan D. Magee**  
Interior Design  
January 23, 2022, Anna Maria Island, Florida

**1964**  
**Susan M. (Campbell) Green**  
Commercial Design  
May 19, 2020, Sylacauga, Alabama

**Donald Gene Henderson**  
Commercial Design  
June 17, 2020, Reform, Alabama

**Robert Jeptha “Jep” Morgan**  
Commercial Design  
March 31, 2021, Ackworth, Georgia

**Carol A. (VonPichl) Schaffstein**  
Interior Design  
January 23, 2022, Evansville, Indiana

**1965**  
**George Pierson**  
Commercial Design  
February 6, 2022, Broomall, Pennsylvania

**1967**  
**Sara Alice (Crowell Zachini) Edelman**  
Fine Arts  
December 1, 2016, Arroyo Seco, New Mexico

**Christine Joy Koczwara**  
Fine Arts  
November 24, 2020, Cookeville, Tennessee

**Ann Lee Sjogren**  
Commercial Design  
June 2, 2021, Boerne, Texas

**1968**  
**Carl L. Schlender**  
Commercial Design  
February 25, 2021, West Dover, Vermont

**1969**  
**Larry Gordon Brock**  
Commercial Design  
May 2, 2019, Marianna, Florida

**Orvil Buell Sullivan, Jr.**  
Interior Design  
June 6, 2021, Nashville, Tennessee

**1970**  
**William Knox “Bill” Brookes, Jr.**  
Fine Arts  
October 12, 2021, Wacissa, Florida

**Nora Faye (Simmons) Hammons**  
Fine Arts  
January 5, 2022, Toccoa, Georgia

**Cristina “Tina” (Gauntt) Hicks**  
Advertising Design  
July 3, 2021, Lawrenceville, Georgia

**Judith Lynn (Mrazek) Lashley**  
Fine Arts  
March 9, 2021, Rainier, Washington

**Gerald Joseph “Jerry” Malec**  
Commercial Design  
October 25, 2020, Farmington Hills, Michigan

**1974**  
**Thomas John Hillenbrand**  
Advertising Design  
September 13, 2021, Crossville, Tennessee

**Bruce Torin Merenda**  
Advertising Design  
May 1, 2017, Tampa, Florida

**1975**  
**Robert S. “Siesta Shawn” McLoughlin**  
Advertising Design  
September 12, 2021, Siesta Key, Florida

**Norma Pressly-Tammisaar**  
Painting  
August 7, 2021, Avon Lake, Ohio

**Captain Larry Bruce Sample**  
Advertising Design  
March 19, 2020, Anderson, South Carolina

**Arthur Alto Surber**  
Advertising Design  
July 24, 2020, Panama City, Florida

**1978**  
**Spencer Pettit**  
Graphic Design  
January 29, 2022, Orlando, Florida

**1980**  
**Denise L. (Sharrit) Whelton**  
Graphic Design and Illustration  
March 4, 2020, Yuma, Arizona

**1981**  
**Sharon Ann (Snipes) Ferguson**  
Fine Arts  
July 4, 2020, Chester, Pennsylvania

**1983**  
**David Lee McAdams**  
Interior Design and Space Planning  
July 2, 2016, Sewickley, Pennsylvania

**1987**  
**Kimberley A. Mizen-Wood**  
Fine Arts  
January 25, 2022, North Port, Florida

**Julie E. Ross**  
Graphic Design and Illustration  
June 25, 2021, Sarasota, Florida

**1988**  
**Sandra Koop-Small**  
Fine Arts  
December 3, 2021, DeLand, Florida

**1996**  
**Thomas James “TJ” Neil, Jr.**  
Illustration  
January 12, 2020, Lecanto, Florida

**2005**  
**Christopher Roy McConnell**  
Interior Design  
August 18, 2021, Miami, Florida

**Choo J. Whyte**  
Fine Arts  
January 30, 2022, Portsmouth, New Hampshire



# Finding Love at Ringling

Want your love story told?  
Get in touch with us at  
[alumni@ringling.edu](mailto:alumni@ringling.edu)



Lauren & Paul

**Lauren (Cash) Detling '20, Motion Design**  
**Paul Detling '19, Motion Design**

I first met Lauren at a Motion Design mixer. She was a quiet, tall, red-headed girl, but I also knew she was much more than that, something about her drew me in. Every day I'd see her eating lunch by herself, so I'd join her and ask about her day. Over the course of a semester of lunches together, we formed a good friendship and a few months later, I asked her out to dinner and a show. We were married in June of 2020 a month after her graduation—not even a pandemic could stop us!

-Paul Detling ❤️



Joy & Tom

**Joy Cumbaa Snyder '83, Fine Arts**  
**Tom Snyder '83, Fine Arts**

As a young man, I often daydreamed about getting "the" girl through chivalry and a sword. Little did I realize it would be courage and a T-square that would win the heart of a fair maiden. The beautiful girl I wanted to get to know had a dilemma with her T-square: Mr. Custode asked if anyone was willing to trade her plain T-square for one that had a ruler printed on it. I gladly volunteered and the rest is our shared history. Forty-two years later we (and the T-squares) are still together!

We continue to work as full-time freelance artists from our home/studio in Sanford, Florida. Projects range from commissioned paintings and sculpture to creating stop motion animation puppet heads for the Emmy-winning TV show, *Robot Chicken*.

-Tom Snyder ❤️



Beverly & Joe

**Beverly Bradley Kaiser '50, Fine Arts**  
**Joe Kaiser '50, Interior Design (1920-2002)**

Both Joe Kaiser and I were from Tampa, but we didn't meet until we were students at the then Ringling School of Art. He was there in 1947 (having served in the Army during WWII) going to school under the GI Bill. I first moved into room 308 of the girls' dorm in October of 1948.

At night after dinner, Ringling students would gather in the lobby of the dorm to dance, play ping-pong or cards, play the piano and sing, or just talk. For dances, we were encouraged to borrow costumes from the Ringling Bros. Circus to wear to the Beaux Arts Ball, and in 1951 some of the students were chosen to be extras in the *Greatest Show on Earth* film.

Joe and I didn't get together as a couple until November of 1950. After my 3rd year and his 4th, we got married in July of 1951. We had 3 children, 3 grandchildren, and, so far, 2 great grandchildren. Joe passed away in February of 2002, 6 months after we celebrated 50 years of marriage.

I'm proud of what Ringling College has become and wouldn't change anything about my experience there with Joe.

-Beverly Bradley Kaiser ❤️

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Glass art on display from the collection of Richard and Barbara Basch.

