

SEMI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

FALL '24
ARTS REVIEW

MC Art Beat

Visual, Performing, and Media Arts News at Montgomery College



MC
MONTGOMERY
COLLEGE



Message from the Dean

DEAR FRIENDS OF MONTGOMERY COLLEGE ARTS,

Fall 2024 was an exciting time in the Visual, Performing, and Media Arts at Montgomery College. In addition to our extensive class offerings, an outstanding array of performances, exhibitions, and workshops showcased the immense talent and dedication of our students, faculty, and staff.

Our special events included the Montgomery College Guitar Festival, which brought world-renowned musicians to campus to lead a day of workshops and masterclasses followed by a wonderful evening concert. Project Locrea (from “love” and “creativity”) headlined the 22nd Annual World Arts Festival with their unique fusion of folk, classical, jazz, and contemporary music from around the world. And the highly-anticipated MC Short Film Festival, now in its second year, brought prominent local filmmakers to campus to screen and discuss their work with an enthusiastic crowd.

We have devoted extra time in this issue of *Art Beat* to our beautiful art galleries and the faculty who make them sources of inspiration for our community. We highlight the Media Arts Gallery on the Rockville campus which celebrated its grand reopening this fall with two outstanding photography exhibits curated by new director, Professor Ronald Beverly. At Takoma Park/Silver Spring, Katherine Knight transformed the Concourse Gallery into a delightful summertime retreat with her site-specific installation, *Pool*, and in the Sarah Silberman Gallery, we celebrated Professor Zdeno Mayercak’s 20 years at MC with a dazzling retrospective.

As we say goodbye to Professor Mayercak and Professor Avery from music, who will both be missed, we are thrilled to welcome Professor Andrew Inches to the TV and Radio faculty and Professor Amelia Hankin to the Rockville and Germantown Art Department.

Spring 2025 promises to be just as eventful as the fall. Be sure to check our Spring 2025 Arts Calendar for theatre productions, dance performances, concerts, lectures, workshops, gallery exhibitions, and other arts programming at montgomerycollege.edu/artsinstitute.

We wish you a wonderful semester and hope to see you at an arts event very soon.

Frank Trezza, PhD

Dean for the Visual, Performing, and Media Arts
frank.trezza@montgomerycollege.edu

Cover photograph by Jack Rosenberg

A Poor Man’s Gift from *A Lens on Life’s Lessons*

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Contributors

Dr. Frank Trezza, Editor
Collegewide Dean for the Arts

Dr. Elizabeth Melanson, Writer
Professor of Art History

Katherine Hubley, Writer & Designer
Professor of Graphic Design

Kai Fang, Writer & Designer
Professor of Graphic Design

Special Thanks

Music Professor, Scott Borg
Music Professor, Heather Brown
Visual Arts Professor, Katherine Knight
TV and Radio Professor, Andrew Inches
Professor Amelia Hankin
Professor Ronald Beverly
Professor Victor Provost
Professor Zdeno Mayercak
Dr. Frank Trezza, Collegewide Dean of
Visual, Performing, and Media Arts



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MONTGOMERY COLLEGE GUITAR FESTIVAL:

Strings of Inspiration



Above: Loudoun Youth Guitars Photo courtesy of Scott Borg



MID-MARYLAND
Guitar
FESTIVAL

The Montgomery College Guitar Festival returned with resounding success this year, marking its 5th edition and a vibrant reintroduction following a hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A cornerstone of Montgomery College's cultural calendar, the festival is a favorite of Scott Borg, Artistic Director of the Festival, and Guitar Professor at Montgomery College. It's a celebration of the guitar's versatility and the profound connection it fosters among musicians and audiences alike. This year, the event set a new benchmark by showcasing two iconic concertos alongside a host of other activities designed to educate, inspire, and unite music lovers of all backgrounds.

This festival was funded by the Arts Institute at Montgomery College, and since its inception, the MC Guitar Festival has stood as a platform for artistic exploration and collaboration. What began as a modest gathering of guitar enthusiasts has grown into a dynamic, multi-day event that celebrates the instrument's rich history and

contemporary relevance.

This year's festival was particularly special, as it was the first to feature evening performances of guitar concertos in over three decades. Collaborating with Pablo Saelzer, a Montgomery College faculty member and conductor, festival



The Guitar Festival Program



Workshop at the MC Guitar Festival

organizers crafted an orchestra capable of delivering two of the most celebrated works in the guitar repertoire. This ambitious undertaking not only elevated the festival's artistic caliber but also reaffirmed its role as a hub for world-class performances and community engagement.

To match the festival's elevated vision, organizers chose the Cultural Arts Center as its home. This venue, a gem of the DMV area, provided an ideal setting for both the main performances and the festival's diverse lineup of workshops and activities. Its 500-seat auditorium offered an intimate yet grand atmosphere for the evening concert, while its smaller spaces were perfect for the day's hands-on and interactive sessions.

The festival began with a variety of afternoon activities designed to engage attendees on multiple levels. A one-hour interactive technique workshop provided practical exercises for enhancing right- and left-hand dexterity, catering to musicians eager to refine their craft. Colin Davin, the Head of Guitar Studies at Shenandoah University, led a 90-minute masterclass that offered invaluable insights into his teaching methods. Three students were invited to participate in open lessons, giving attendees a chance to observe his approach to nurturing musicality and technical precision.

Adding another layer of artistry, renowned luthier Bill Fonvielle conducted a workshop on guitar-making. Attendees were captivated as Fonvielle detailed the

intricacies of wood selection, construction techniques, and the unique characteristics that define various types of guitars. This workshop provided a rare glimpse into the craftsmanship behind the instrument, deepening appreciation for its creation and evolution.

The afternoon concluded with an open mic session, where 12 talented guitar enthusiasts had the opportunity to perform before an audience. The session fostered a sense of camaraderie and connection, allowing participants to share their passion for music in a supportive environment.

The highlight of the festival was undoubtedly the evening performance, which unfolded in three unforgettable acts. The Loudoun Youth Guitars, under the direction of Dr. Miroslav Lončar, opened the program with a spirited rendition of selections from Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band by The Beatles. Representing one of the most esteemed guitar education programs in the country, the 28 student performers impressed the audience with their precision and enthusiasm.

The second act featured Colin Davin performing Joaquín Rodrigo's *Fantasia para un Gentilhombre* under the baton of Pablo Saelzer. Davin's nuanced interpretation and technical mastery

brought new life to the composition, captivating the audience with its elegance and vitality.

The evening reached its climax with Scott Borg's performance of Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, one of the most beloved works in the classical guitar repertoire. Borg's rendition was both powerful and poignant, showcasing the piece's emotional depth and technical demands. Supported by the orchestra, his performance left the audience spellbound, drawing the festival to a triumphant close.

Pulling off an event of this magnitude required meticulous planning and collaboration. The festival's orchestra featured musicians from renowned ensembles such as the National Symphony Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and several military bands. Their professionalism and artistry were integral to the festival's success, ensuring each performance resonated with excellence.

The festival's administrative team also played a critical role, particularly in marketing the event and engaging the community. Thanks to their efforts, the festival drew an audience of over 300 attendees, including more than 100 students. This diverse turnout reflected the festival's wide appeal and its ability to

unite people through the shared language of music.

Over the years, the Montgomery College Guitar Festival has become a symbol of artistic collaboration and cultural enrichment. This year's event continued that tradition while setting new standards for what a community-based arts festival can achieve.

For many attendees, the festival offered a transformative experience. Students, in particular, expressed excitement about their first exposure to live classical guitar music, with many asking about next year's date. Parents of performers, too, were effusive in their praise, recognizing the festival as a unique platform for young musicians to shine.

The success of this year's festival

has paved the way for even greater possibilities. Organizers hope to expand the event in the coming years, bringing in more volunteers and fostering deeper community engagement. The goal is to continue inspiring audiences and musicians alike while highlighting the guitar's ability to bridge cultural and generational divides.

As Chair of the Music Department, Alvin Trask, aptly put it, "This festival is about more than just music. It's about inspiring and motivating others, fostering a sense of unity, and celebrating the shared humanity that connects us all through the guitar."

The Montgomery College Guitar Festival is more than an event—it's a testament to the power of music to enrich lives, build connections, and create lasting memories.



Evening Performance at the MC Guitar Festival Photo Courtesy of Scott Borg



*A New Chapter for the
Media Arts Gallery*

The opening reception for A Lens on Life's Lessons. October, 2024

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The Media Arts Gallery on Montgomery College's Rockville campus reopened this fall with two exciting new photography exhibitions.

This fall's shows, *A Lens on Life's Lessons* and *Images: A Fine Art Perspective* are a testament to Beverly's new approach, which he says will be centered on connecting with community organizations and local artists.

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After several years of closure due to pandemic shutdowns and building renovations, the Media Arts Gallery on Montgomery College's Rockville campus reopened this fall with two exciting new photography exhibitions. This

marks a new chapter for the gallery, which welcomed Professor Ronald Beverly as its new director when Martha Vaughan retired in 2020. For Beverly, this fall was his first chance to “carry the torch” handed to him by Vaughan who, he says, “always did an exquisite job with the gallery.” Hers were big shoes to fill, but Beverly, who curated several excellent digital shows (including [The Soul of Ukraine and Looking In/ Looking Out: A Retrospective Look at the Photographic Work of Gene Young](#)) during the closure, benefitted from having the time to contemplate his approach to the job. This fall's shows, *A Lens on Life's Lessons* and *Images: A Fine Art Perspective* are a testament to that new approach, which he says will be centered on connecting with community organizations and local artists.



Nancy Walsh, *Out & In*
from *Images: A Fine Art Perspective*

A Lens on Life's Lessons opened on September 9th, but the idea for the show came about years earlier when Beverly juried an exhibition for the North Bethesda Camera Club. “I was impressed enough (by the quality of the work) that I never forgot it. And so when I

was thinking about how to reopen the gallery, I reached out to (the Club).” They were thrilled to help celebrate the gallery's reopening and worked with Beverly to create “an exhibition of life's lessons, conveyed through the symbiotic relationship of image and text.” The show included work by 28 artists spanning many genres of photography and each photograph was accompanied by a short caption exhorting viewers to learn from another person's perspective.

Many of the exhibiting artists attended the show's opening reception and participated in an informal question and answer session moderated by Beverly. The photographers in attendance offered perspectives on some of the most important issues in the field, from the impact of artificial intelligence and cell



Poster for *Images: A Fine Art Perspective*

phone cameras to recommendations on best practices and equipment.

“The show was a success,” says Beverly. “The participating artists were especially impressed by the facilities and how the exhibition was installed... Since the reopening of the gallery, we are seeing opportunities to engage with the community and provide a venue to showcase their vision. On the academic side, we are also seeing ways to involve our students in the process of installing an exhibition, viewing photographs by other artists outside of the curriculum requirements and gaining knowledge from the artists themselves.”

Like the first show, *Images: A Fine Art Perspective*, offered the MC community access to work by local artists, this time in the form of a traveling show from the

Falls Church Arts Gallery. Again, many of the exhibiting artists attended the exhibition’s opening and participated in a question-and-answer session.

“The results were detailed responses and discussions among the artists who were inspired and invigorated from learning more about their fellow photographers,” says Beverly. “These exchanges were later communicated in the classrooms. Ultimately, we will have students present during the discourse so they can bear witness to the practice of integrated learning and critical thinking and esthetic judgement. A win-win for all vested parties.”

Access to thoughtfully curated shows of work by professional artists is one of the many benefits of the gallery for MC students. “We want them to

see what’s out there. How artists are pursuing and perfecting their work... and to think about how they can apply what they see (in the gallery) to what they are learning in the classroom” says Beverly. In addition, students will have the opportunity to exhibit their own work in the gallery. Annual shows will highlight the best work produced in every discipline of the Media Arts and Technologies Department, including animation, web design, illustration, photography, and graphic design. This spring’s student show will be open from March 24th through May 23rd

with a reception on April 23rd from 5 to 6:30 pm. In addition, you’ll find an exhibition of work by the Gaithersburg Camera Club, titled *Shutter Release*, on view from January 21st through March 7th with a reception on February 5th from 5-6:30 p.m.

The Media Arts Gallery is located on the ground floor of the Technical Center on Montgomery College’s Rockville Campus. The Gallery is open to the public Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m..



Tom Gross, *Flag Bearer* from *A Lens on Life's Lessons*

Lounge



**MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
SHORT FILM FESTIVAL**

**A CELEBRATION OF
STORYTELLING AND CONNECTION**



The Montgomery College Short Film Festival returned for its second year this November, bringing a dynamic collection of short films to Theatre 2 in the Cultural Arts Center. Curated by local filmmaker and producer Jon Gann, the 90-minute showcase provided a powerful platform for diverse narratives and fresh perspectives, inviting both students and the local community to engage with thought-provoking storytelling.

Following the success of its inaugural year, the MC Shorts Film Festival was created to address two important needs: offering students an opportunity to learn from professionals in the film industry and fostering a greater appreciation for the power of storytelling through cinema. “Our student population often lacks the direct connections needed to network with established filmmakers,” shared the TPSS Performing Arts Committee. “We think it’s crucial to bring those with



Short Film Collection

real-world experience to inspire and guide our up-and-coming filmmakers.” With its return, the festival continued its mission to connect students and the community to powerful stories that reflect a broad spectrum of human experiences.

Though the festival did not adhere to a single theme, the selected films resonated deeply with the audience, offering heartwarming, humorous, and challenging narratives. “The stories span a wide range of human experience,” explained organizers. “From friendships in a blind bowling league to the poignant love story of an aging couple, the films offered something relatable for everyone.”

Among the standout pieces was “Bad Asians,” a short that tackled internalized racism with wit and candor, flipping expectations during an awkward one-night stand. Another crowd favorite was “The Job,” a satirical look at labor dynamics, where a Hispanic man picks workers from a desperate pool of white-collar professionals, cleverly turning traditional stereotypes on their head. The film “Banana Bread” balanced humor and tension, portraying a man navigating a gunfight while juggling a phone call with his overbearing Jewish mother.

Collectively, the films reflected issues of identity, culture, mental health, and resilience, themes that resonated strongly with Montgomery College’s diverse student body. “The audience found the shorts both heartwarming and thought-provoking,” organizers noted.

Complementing the film screenings, the festival featured a panel discussion with prominent local filmmakers, offering invaluable insights into both the creative and business sides of filmmaking. Panelists included Alyscia Cunningham, a producer specializing in horror and documentaries, and founder of Brown Women in the Arts; Mark Ricche, an actor, playwright, and producer with multiple awards under his belt; and Kerri Sheehan, a member of the Producers Guild of America with vast experience in production and networking. Jon Gann, the festival curator, rounded out the panel as a celebrated producer and director.

The panel was skillfully facilitated by Montgomery College’s own film professor Graham Holford, whose expertise in screenwriting and production led to a lively and enlightening discussion. Students appreciated the opportunity to hear diverse perspectives, with one attendee noting, “The panel discussion was by far my favorite aspect of the event. The choice of panelists was great in providing viewpoints on the different roles people have in the industry.” The festival also embraced inclusivity by offering the discussion as a Zoom webinar, allowing remote participation for those unable to attend in person.



Photo by Julia A. Smith

Held in the blackbox Theatre 2 at the Cultural Arts Center, the festival benefited from updated equipment and the expertise of Cultural Arts Center staff. Production manager Chris Campanella played a key role in ensuring the technical aspects ran seamlessly, while the newly enhanced performance spaces allowed the films to shine with high-quality audio and visuals. “The Cultural Arts Center has always set a standard for excellence,” shared organizers. “The community has come to expect quality events here, and the feedback we’ve received tells us this festival delivered.”

Bringing the festival to life was no small feat. The TPSS Performing Arts Committee—comprising part-time faculty members Alzira “Lena” Ruano (photography), Ted Shusterman (music), and Wyckham Avery (film and theatre)—worked tirelessly to coordinate the event. Support also came from Jason Bruffy, director of the Cultural Arts Center, and Pablo Callejo, the VPA Department’s administrative aide. “Pablo was instrumental in making this festival happen,” organizers shared. “From drawing up contracts to designing posters and promoting the event

on social media, his dedication and attention to detail ensured everything fell into place.”

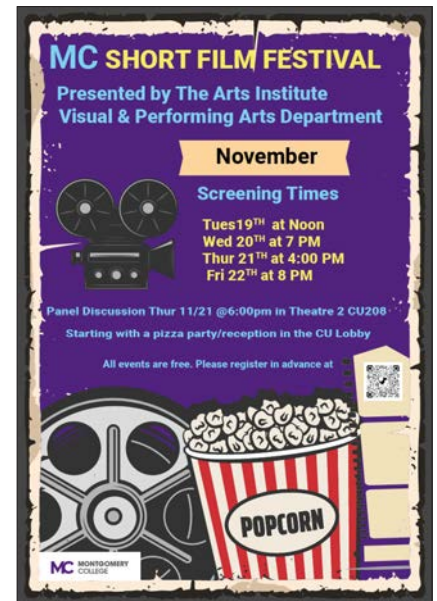
The team also collaborated with the broader college community, reaching out to departments, Student Life, and local film organizations like the AFI Silver Theatre.

The MC Shorts Film Festival has quickly cemented itself as a vital cultural event at Montgomery College. Organizers hope to expand the festival in future years, with growing interest in showcasing student films alongside the curated lineup. “The films we showed this year proved what is possible, even with limited budgets and time,” organizers reflected. “We hope to encourage students to explore their creativity, network with local filmmakers, and gain confidence in their ability to tell impactful stories.” The festival’s success underscores the importance of supporting the arts in education. “When we diminish support for the arts, we diminish our capacity for empathy and perspective,” organizers said. “The arts connect us in ways that other pursuits cannot.”

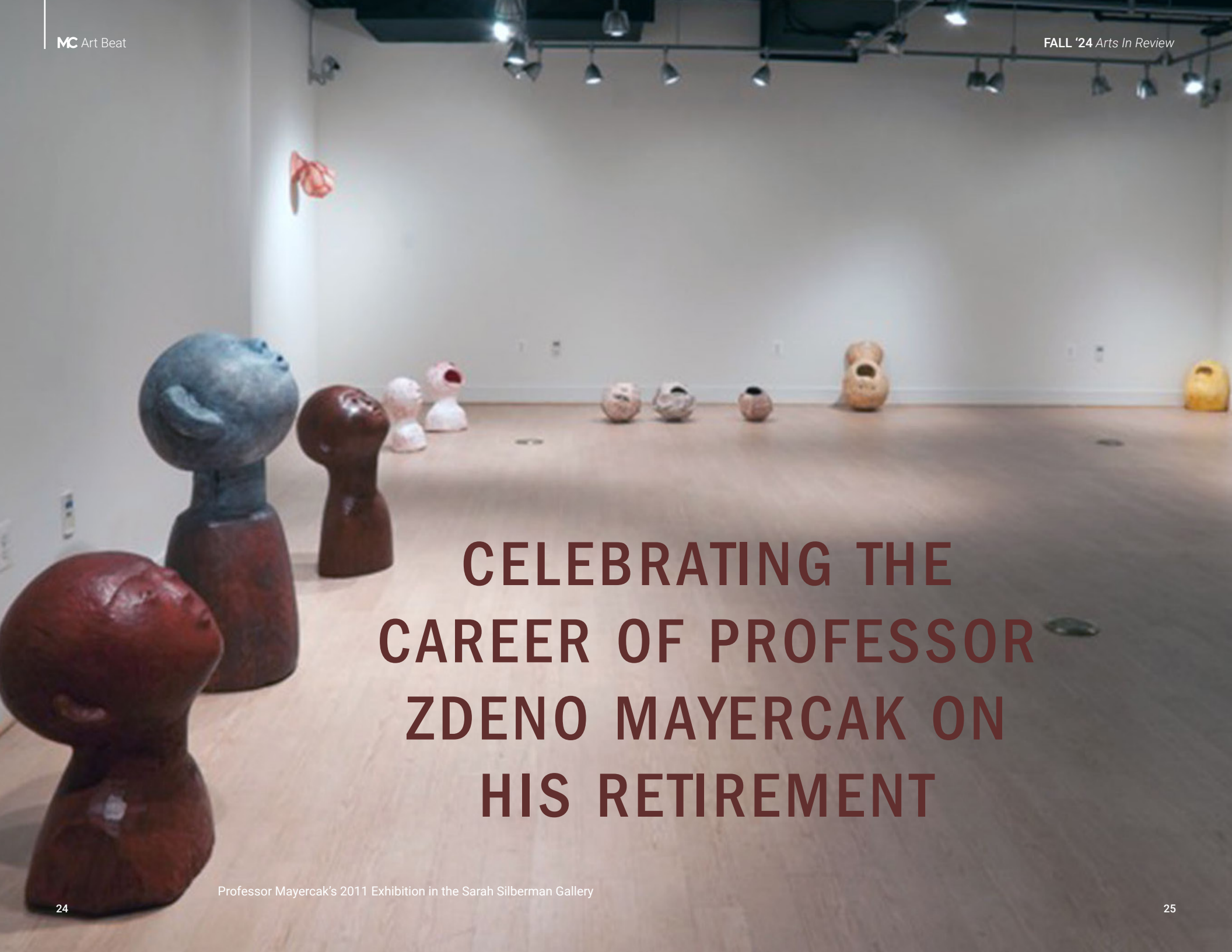
For students and community members alike, the festival offered both inspiration and connection.

“One student told us, ‘I thought the choices were great in providing something all audience members could connect with,’” organizers shared. “That’s exactly what we aim for: to show stories that reflect who we are and what we can become.”

As the festival continues to grow, it promises to remain a beacon of creativity and a platform for aspiring filmmakers, proving once again that storytelling through film has the power to bridge divides and bring people together.



Film Festival Flyer



CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF PROFESSOR ZDENO MAYERCAK ON HIS RETIREMENT

Professor Mayercak's 2011 Exhibition in the Sarah Silberman Gallery



Zdeno Mayercak in the Silberman Gallery with *The Tree Remembers What the Axe Forgets*

After 20 years as a professor of Sculpture and 3D Design, Zdeno Mayercak will retire from the Rockville and Germantown Art Department this spring. To mark the occasion, the Sarah Silberman Gallery hosted an exhibition of his work, Zdeno Mayercak: Sculptures 2012-2024 last November. The show, a retrospective of the 12 years since Mayercak's last solo exhibition in the gallery, incorporated themes that have run through his work since the beginning as well as hints of what's to come.

Mayercak, who moved to the United States from Slovakia in 1986, earned a master's degree in sculpture and

drawing from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. He also attended the School of Fine and Industrial Arts in Bratislava, where he studied wood carving and design, and spent a year at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome studying under the sculptor Lorenzo Guerrini. He began his teaching career at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava, and has held appointments at the Maine College of Art, the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Ohio State University, Appalachian State University, and the University of Art and Design in Helsinki, Finland. Mayercak is the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship as

well as a Pollock Krasner Grant, and his work is exhibited internationally, including in recent solo shows at the Castle Art Gallery in Klenova, Czechia, the Delaplaine Arts Center in Frederick, MD, and the Slovak Embassy in Washington, DC. His work is in collections including the Klenova Museum of Art and Museum Kampa in the Czech Republic, the University of Art and Design, Finland, and many private collections.

One marked characteristic of Mayercak's work is his deep appreciation for well-designed utilitarian objects. "I've loved tools since I was a kid," he says, pointing to *Gossip*, a wooden carving of three hammers seemingly sharing a secret

atop a tree stump. "When I was tiny, my family remodeled our house and I was always there. I snuck in and eventually started helping...Now, in any country I go to, I find the museum where I can see tools." These references to his childhood appear in both the subject and material of Mayercak's work. While he works in a variety of media including steel, resin, stone, and ceramics, it is clear that his preference is for wood. "I made my first sculpture in wood when I was 12, and I always come back to my first love, carving. In Slovakia, in my grandparents' time, it was a wooden culture. It is part of why I have a fascination with it."

Like the hammers in *Gossip*, many of the objects and tools Mayercak



Genetic Factor (left foreground) and other work in the Silberman Gallery

references appear to be animated with what he calls “touches of the figurative.” A chair flips playfully, balancing on its back, a shovel ties itself in knots to avoid work, a pitchfork poses solemnly for an American Gothic-style portrait, and a fork wraps itself lovingly around a spoon. “I hated studying the figure in school,” Mayercak says, and for the first twenty years of his career, he did not incorporate it in his work. That changed when his sons were born. “I tried to experience fatherhood in abstraction and couldn’t,” he explains. This was clear at his 2011 solo show in the Silberman Gallery, where doll-like wooden figures and ceramic babies’ heads crying and gazing upward in wonder rested together directly on the floor. “That show was entirely inspired by my sons.”

The nearly 9-foot-tall spindly steel and resin sculptures that greeted visitors at his 2024 show, he says, are a continuation on the theme of parenthood. In these works from the *Son and Father* series, the children are no longer babies. They poise atop the attenuated legs of their fathers, arms outstretched and ready to soar. These are juxtaposed in the gallery with *Mamma Spoon*, one of several nods to Constantin Brancusi, in which two spoons nestle together, gnarled roots anchoring them to the ground. “Not a lot of sculptors do fathers and sons,



Mamma Spoon and a work from the *Son and Father* series in the Silberman Gallery but it’s universal... Mothers are more protective. Fathers let their children fly.”

Roots are a prominent feature in several smaller works with titles like *Nowhere to Go*, *Trapped*, and *Forbidden Entrance*. “You’ve probably noticed that I’m not very optimistic,” Mayercak quips as we pass them. “People ask if my work is about suffering, but it’s not just about suffering or just about my experiences. (The themes) are universal...I’m fascinated by what you can communicate when you simplify something,” Mayercak explains, pointing to the *Love Illusion* series. In numbers 1 and 2, iron nails are driven through wooden hearts, holding them

fast to rough planks. Acknowledging that they might evoke thoughts of a crucifixion scene, he says, “My work is not religious or political. The reference is not intentional, but it gets the point across.” In *Love Illusion #3*, the nail has been replaced by a heart-shaped piece of iron that cleaves the wooden heart in two.

His latest work, 5 cubic stone sculptures created last summer, bring to mind the block-like ancient Egyptian funerary monuments that Mayercak has always admired. These works, however, are more about unpredictability and intangibility than permanence and solidity. In *All You Have Are Memories*, you might miss the slight impression of a torso or the protrusion of a spine and buttocks interrupting the smooth service of a slab of polished alabaster. In *Genetic Factor*, a body part—lips, an ear, a nose—emerges from each side of a cube. “Genetics is like rolling dice. It’s unpredictable. You have no control,” Mayercak explains.

Unpredictability is not something Mayercak avoids in work or life. This is why, he says, he’s never liked manifestos and even has trouble with artist statements. “I am always working on 5 or 6 pieces at the same time, so if I don’t know what’s next, I move on...One thing leads to another.” His approach to life after retirement

is similar. “Reflecting on my career, I am filled with gratitude for the many opportunities I have had to contribute to our academic community. Teaching, mentoring, and collaborating with students and colleagues has been a rewarding experience. As I transition into retirement, I am looking forward to new adventures and opportunities in my life.”

As his colleagues wish him many great adventures, his presence will be missed. “I am confident that our Art Department will continue to thrive in the years to come,” Mayercak says, “Thank you for the privilege of being part of this wonderful institution.”



Gossip and *The Ceremonial Shovel* in the Sarah Silberman Gallery last fall

DIVE INTO “POOL” AT THE CONCOURSE GALLERY:

A MIXED MEDIA INSTALLATION BY
KATHERINE KNIGHT



Installation of *The Pool*. Photo by Katherine Knight



"Pool" Installation.
Photo by Katherine Knight

Montgomery College's Concourse Gallery recently became an artistic oasis, hosting "Pool," an evocative site-specific installation by Katherine Knight that ran from August 30 to October 27, 2024. This immersive mixed media exhibit transformed the gallery into a textured tapestry of fabric, collage, and three-dimensional installations, inviting attendees to experience Knight's vision of nostalgia, artistry, and introspection.

"Pool" is more than a display—it's an experiential blend of autobiography and skillful artistry. Knight, known

for her innovative use of mixed media, typically works with intimate collages and sketchbook illustrations. However, this installation marked a daring expansion into three-dimensional work, inspired by both her formal arts education and her personal history in theater and textile crafts. Drawing on a background shaped by stitchers and embroiderers who influenced her from a young age, Knight's installation fused the structural with the decorative, the theatrical with the personal.

Knight's journey to "Pool" began with a serendipitous spark from her

work on the Takoma Park Exhibitions Committee, where the theme "Blue" set her creative gears turning. She imagined her son joyfully diving into a shimmering blue pool, a vision that quickly expanded beyond her initial sketches. "As soon as we said it, I pictured my son leaping into an aqua blue pool, represented by billowing fabric," she reflected, noting that this theme allowed her to dive deeper into dimensional textiles and mixed media.

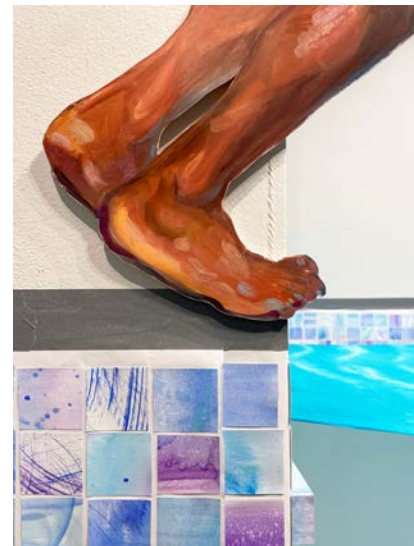
VisArts played a pivotal role in bringing her concept to life. Upon a walkthrough with VisArts' Gallery Director Frank McCauley, Knight received a game-



"Pool" Installation.
Photo by Katherine Knight

changing suggestion: why not turn the entire gallery into a pool? This shift in scale was both ambitious and daunting, but Knight embraced the challenge, treating the gallery as a "stage set" where viewers could wander through her creative world.

Knight's journey in preparing for "Pool" during her sabbatical was nothing short of an artistic marathon. Working like a theater director with no cast, she meticulously designed and crafted each element, collaborating with friends and family who became her "models" in this imagined pool. Her year of creation involved a detailed schedule, countless mini-deadlines, and a hands-on



"Pool" Installation.
Photo by Katherine Knight



"Pool" Installation.
Photo by Gregory Staley

approach that called upon her expertise in costume and prop-making.

The result was a work that resonated deeply with audiences. A delight for visitors of all ages, the installation prompted children to interact with the space, imitating swimmers and observing figures posed along the pool's edge. Knight's work evoked moments of human vulnerability and familial connections, presenting the pool as a sanctuary amid today's fast-paced world. "Giving yourself

permission to unplug and just be human for a while is so important," she shared. "Pools are great for that. It's hard to be doomscrolling on your phone while you're in the water."

"Pool" was also a collaborative effort behind the scenes. Faculty members from Montgomery College, including Miriam Ewers, Mieke Gents and Michael Booker, offered crucial advice and conceptual support, while Knight's friend and costume designer Eric Abele guided her in choosing the right

fabrics. The installation also drew on expert assistance from the team at Dharma Trading Company and the ever-supportive VisArts exhibitions team as well.

Visitors, particularly students and faculty from Montgomery College, were enchanted by the exhibit's emotional depth and technical mastery. Some even saw reflections of their own relationships and experiences in Knight's depictions of children and adults at the water's edge. Sungmin

Park, a painting student and MC Intern at VisArts, spent substantial time engaging with the exhibit, gaining inspiration for his own work.

In "Pool," Katherine Knight has given audiences a space to relax, reflect, and reconnect—whether through memories of summertime swims or by immersing in the art itself. Her work serves as a powerful reminder of the beauty in life's small, fleeting moments, expertly crafted into a mesmerizing gallery experience.



*The World Arts Festival Welcomes
Project Loceera to Campus*

Above: Yana Nikol (on flute) and Cristian Perez (on guitar) from Project Loceera run a workshop for MC students as part of this semester's World Arts Festival

“Project Locrea, which derives its names from from the words “LO-ve” and “CREA-tivity,” is a global jazz-fusion ensemble dedicated to creating and performing original compositions and contemporary arrangements inspired by folk music of different countries.

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The World Arts Festival at Montgomery College is an annual celebration of music, dance, literature, storytelling, film, and visual art from around the world. Now in its 22nd year, the festival features artist residencies, workshops, lectures, and performances by internationally recognized musicians, artists, dancers, scholars, and writers. When the Festival’s founder and director, Professor Dawn Avery, retired from the College last year, she entrusted its organization to her colleague and longtime collaborator, Professor Victor Provost, who chose Project Locrea as this fall’s resident artists.

Project Locrea, which derives its names from from the words “LO-ve” and “CREA-tivity,” is a global jazz-fusion ensemble dedicated to creating and performing original compositions and contemporary arrangements inspired by folk music of different countries. Combining sound and instrumentation of world folk traditions with classical, jazz and contemporary music conventions, the project’s focus is to bring a better understanding and deeper connection between cultures in current days. The ensemble’s eponymous first album received nominations and won 1st place in two WAMMIE 2022



Project Locrea

(Washington Area Music Awards) categories - Best World Music Group and Best World Music Song for their rendition of the Ethiopian folk song “Abet, Abet” featuring Munit Mesfin.

“In the past, the World Arts Festival has tended to be concentrated on a particular musical culture,” says Provost. In the fall of 2023, for example, the spotlight was on Afghan music, while in fall 2022, it celebrated Ukrainian music and culture (for more on these events see our Winter ‘23 and ‘24 issues of Art Beat). “Project Locrea is multinational. There is representation from East and Southeast Asia, East and West Africa, South America, and Eastern Europe, and they bring all of those traditions together in a very unique

way. I thought it would be a great opportunity to bring these disparate musical cultures to light.”

Provost, who also directs MC’s World Ensemble, arranged for members of Project Locrea to lead two well-attended workshops followed by a concert at the Parilla Performing Arts Center on November 4. At the



MC Professor Victor Provost

workshop, Yana Nikol, who plays the flute, introduced aspects of Bulgarian music to MC students, while Cristian Perez, the group’s music director and guitarist, played traditional Argentinian music. They were joined on stage by the rest of the group, which includes Chao Tian on the Chinese dulcimer, Munit Mesfin (vocals), Marty Risemberg (drums), Imam Hamdani (guitar), Grant Le (bass), Snehes Nag (sitar),

Juan Cayrampoma (Peruvian pipes), Manny Arciniaga (percussion), Benjamin Rikhoff (bass), and Steve Arnold (bass).

Professor Provost, who is widely regarded as one of the world’s leading voices on the steel pan (or steel drum), joined the ensemble on stage for a performance of his original composition, “Mazuk Mwen” and a traditional Ethiopian folk song called “Abet Abet.” Originally from the Virgin Islands, Provost earned a master’s degree in jazz studies and has developed a reputation as a dazzling soloist with an impressive improvisational voice and style. He was Washington D.C. City Paper’s “Jazz Percussionist of the Year” for six years running and works with several of the Mid-Atlantic region’s most lauded musical collectives. In addition to leading his own group, Victor tours with NEA Jazz Master, Paquito D’Rivera and is a member of the GRAMMY award-winning Afro Bop Alliance. Provost conducts residencies and master classes throughout the United States and Caribbean at schools such as Berklee College of Music in Boston, University of Akron, Miami University, NYU,

TTU, and Northern Illinois University. He is also an Arts Ambassador to his hometown of the U.S. Virgin Islands, which honored him with a Special Congressional Recognition in 2014, and to which he returns frequently to perform and teach as part of Dion Parson’s community-based arts initiative, the United Jazz Foundation.

Provost joined the Music faculty at Montgomery College in 2016 and quickly started teaching World Music courses. By 2020, he was the director of the World Ensemble, a diverse collective of instrumentalists and vocalists that combine their individual experiences to create a myriad of musical styles from around the globe. “I’ve really enjoyed the World Ensemble,” he says, “It’s interdisciplinary and intergenerational. I tend to focus everything through a kind of Caribbean, South American lens, but we have all sorts of instruments and vocals that join us. (We) even (have) some students that have just walked in and said, ‘listen, I have no musical experience whatsoever. Is there a place for me in the ensemble?’ And we always find something that is successful for them...The more I do it,

the less I think of myself as a teacher or a director and the more I think of myself as a kind of a facilitator, just helping all of these people with different experiences and at different levels make music together.”

Provost is excited about the future of the World Arts Festival. “This area is just so ripe with incredibly talented people from all over the world.

The real challenge is going to be narrowing down our choices. I would love to begin building a really robust festival that includes several different acts over multiple weeks...That are a lot of opportunities here to (engage) world class artists.” This spring, the Festival will feature The JoGo Project, a WAMMIE Award-winning jazz and gogo band from Washington, DC, created by Saxophonist and DC jazz stalwart Elijah Jamal Balbed. JoGo has performed at Blues Alley, the Kennedy Center, and the DC Jazz Festival, and was the first gogo band ever to perform in Russia on a cultural diplomacy tour on behalf of the U.S. State Department. From 2021-2023, JoGo maintained a monthly residency at the legendary jazz club Keystone Korner in Baltimore.



NEW FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

A decorative graphic featuring several pink stars of varying sizes scattered around the text. Below the text is a thick, horizontal purple brushstroke that tapers at both ends, with a few small pink stars positioned just below it.

Andrew Inches
&
Amelia Hankin

Montgomery College is pleased to welcome *Andrew Inches*, the newest addition to its TV and radio program faculty.

With a rich background in broadcast production and education, Andrew brings a wealth of industry experience and a passion for teaching that promises to benefit students preparing for careers in broadcasting. His journey in the world of media production has taken him across the country, and he is now eager to share his insights with the next generation of media professionals. We had the opportunity to learn more about Andrew's background, his teaching approach, and his outlook on the future of the industry.

Andrew's background spans both broadcast production and education. Over the years, he has worked at various television stations nationwide, including WJLA Channel 7 in Washington, D.C. He has also taught media production at different educational levels, from middle school to college, making him well-versed in both practical and theoretical aspects of the field. His experiences in New York, D.C., Florida, and Missouri, as well as a stint producing online videos for The Philadelphia Inquirer, have equipped him with diverse skills and insights that he's excited to bring into the classroom at Montgomery College.

Andrew first began teaching at Montgomery College a few years ago, starting as a part-time instructor for the Tuesday night Audio Production class (TVRA 125). In Fall 2024, he took on a more permanent role. For him, the chance to blend his professional expertise with teaching has been highly rewarding. He is particularly excited about guiding students who are genuinely interested in broadcasting, helping them develop practical skills and industry knowledge.

What inspires Andrew most is the enthusiasm of his students. He finds great satisfaction in working with individuals who share his passion for creating impactful video production elements. Over the years, his teaching approach has evolved to reflect changes

in the broadcasting field, adapting to the increasing importance of social media, streaming, and online platforms.

Reflecting on how the industry has transformed since he started, Andrew notes that it's not just about equipment and technology anymore; the entire landscape has shifted with a growing emphasis on digital media. Today's media consumption patterns demand adaptability, and Andrew strives to prepare his students for this ever-evolving environment. He believes the future of TV and radio education will require even greater integration of new media, enabling students to develop both traditional skills and digital expertise.

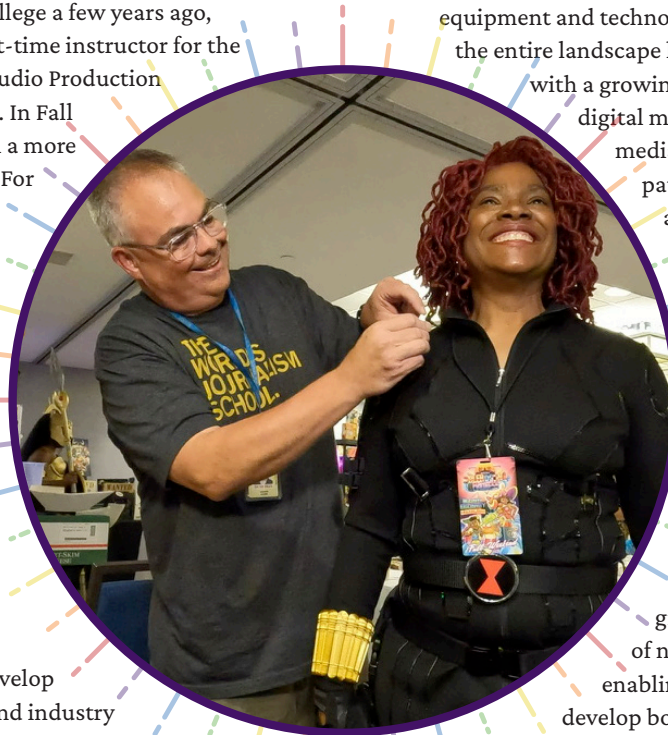
Andrew's approach to teaching is grounded in building rapport with his students. He connects with them over shared interests, from Star Wars (he proudly claims *The Empire Strikes Back* as the greatest film ever) to collecting Funko figures and a love of baseball.

These personal connections create an engaging classroom atmosphere, helping him establish a strong bond with his students.

One of the core lessons Andrew imparts is the importance of networking and relationship-building within the industry. He emphasizes to his students that when they are known as dependable and skilled professionals, they are more likely to be sought out for work. Making connections and maintaining a positive reputation, he believes, are critical to long-term success in media.

Looking toward the future, Andrew predicts that TV and radio education will increasingly focus on digital platforms, reflecting the rapid pace of change in the industry. He envisions a more adaptive curriculum that balances foundational skills with hands-on experience in new media technologies, preparing students for a wide range of career paths.

Montgomery College is fortunate to have an instructor like Andrew Inches, whose extensive industry experience and passion for teaching inspire and equip students to navigate the dynamic world of media production. With Andrew's guidance, Montgomery College's TV and radio students are well-prepared to pursue their dreams and succeed in an ever-evolving industry.



It is with great pleasure that the Rockville and Germantown Art Department welcomes Professor *Amelia Hankin* as the new full-time faculty member in Drawing and 2D Design.

Before joining the faculty at Montgomery College, Hankin was the Artist-in-Residence in Screenprinting at American University in Washington, DC, where she taught undergraduate and graduate classes for 15 years. She has taught printmaking, design, and drawing at George Mason University, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the Rhode Island School of Design as well.

Hankin received her MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in printmaking, and has exhibited nationally and internationally including at The Phillips Collection (Washington, DC), American University Art Museum, Janet Turner Print Museum (Chico, CA), Ellen Miller Gallery (Boston, MA), Eastern Oregon University, University of Richmond Museum (Richmond, VA), Ridderhof Martin Gallery at the University of Mary Washington (Fredericksburg, VA), International Print Center New York (New York, NY), the 808 Gallery at Boston University (Boston, MA), The Chazan Gallery (Providence, RI), The Xavier University Art Gallery (Cincinnati, OH), Kyoto

Seika University, and the RISD Museum of Art (Providence, RI). In 2005, Amelia received an artist's travel grant to study Eastern woodblock printmaking techniques at Kyoto Seika University. Since then, she has been awarded residencies at Pyramid Atlantic Art Center, the Women's Studio Workshop, and Vermont Studio Center. Grants include The DC Commission on the Arts Art Bank, Gottlieb Foundation, the Haven Foundation, CERF, and the Artists' Fellowship.

Professor Hankin works in a variety of media and brings her multidisciplinary approach to the classroom. She especially enjoys teaching 2D Design,



she says, because it allows for versatility and experimentation. Screen printing, a technique that Hankin introduced to the curriculum at American University, features heavily in her own work. In *Fortune Teller* (2018), for example, she combines screen printing with “familiar objects that have been assigned meaning, emotional weight, and purpose,” like the paper fortune tellers she made as a child, to create installations. In an interview with *The American Scholar*, Hankin described *Fortune Teller* as a self-portrait, explaining that the fortune tellers, dreamcatchers, and butterfly wings that are repeated motifs in her work represent birth, regeneration, and death. “Brought together, they acknowledge the microcosmic forces outside of our authority, which impact our lives in small, but tangible ways.” The same themes may be found in her intricate graphite drawings, which were the subject of a recent solo exhibition

at the McLean Project for the Arts titled *Growth Patterns*.

As Professor Hankin navigates her first semester back at Montgomery College (she served as a sabbatical replacement in printmaking back in 2011), she says “I’m excited to get more engaged in the (College) community.” She plans to participate in advising and distance learning training and will, no doubt, bring her extensive experience as a teacher and exhibiting artist to the department’s Sarah Silberman Gallery, where she plans to serve on the exhibition committee. In addition, she has some great ideas for internship and exhibition opportunities that she’s looking forward to introducing to MC students.

Reflecting on what drew her to the position, Professor Hankin says, “I love the student body at Montgomery College. Teaching such a diverse range of learners...having older and younger students in the classroom. Everybody feeds off of each other’s energy. I love that dynamic. That’s what I really appreciate about teaching at MC. Getting to know people from so many walks of life on a personal level. It’s possible here because there’s such a community atmosphere.”

To learn more about Professor Hankin and her work, visit her website, ameliahankin.com

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