



ELSEWHERE

University of Delaware
Master of Fine Arts
Exhibition Catalogue

2021







UNIVERSITY
OF DELAWARE
MASTER OF 2021
FINE ARTS 20

DEPARTMENT OF ART & DESIGN
College of Arts and Sciences

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SUCH SEEMS TO ME

Abigail Donovan

Professor & Director of Graduate Studies

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April 2021

In the spring of the year the skies are filled with birds, and this is how I might translate a passage from the Venerable Bede:

“TALIS,” INQUIENS, “MIHI VIDETUR, REX, VITA HOMINUM PRAESENS
IN TERRIS AD COMPARATIONEM EIUS, QUOD NOBIS INCERTUM EST.
TEMPORIS QUALE CUM, TE RESIDENTE AD COENAM CUM DUCIBUS
AC MINISTRIS TUIS TEMPORE BRUMALI, ACCENSO QUIDEM FOCO
IN MEDIO ET CALIDO EFFECTO COENACULO, FURENTIBUS AUTEM
FORIS PER OMNIA TURBINIBUS HIEMALIIUM PLUVARIUM VEL
NIVIIUM, ADVENIENSQUE UNUS PASSERUM DOMUM CITISSIME
PERVOLAVERIT. QUI CUM PER UNUM OSTIUM INGREDIENS, MOX
PER ALIUD EXIERIT. IPSO QUIDEM TEMPORE, QUO INTUS EST,
HIEMIS TEMPESTATE NON TANGITUR, SED TAMEN MINIMO SPATIO
SERENITATIS AD MOMENTUM EXCURSO, MOX DE HIEME IN HIEMEM
REGREDIENS, TUIS OCULIS ELABITUR. ITA HAEC VITA HOMINUM AD
MODICUM APPARET . . . ”¹

Saying, “Such seems to me, king, the present life of men on the earth to/ as this comparison, because to us it is uncertain: Of the time, of what sort, when with you resting/sitting back for dinner with your commanders and ministers during the time of the winter solstice, certainly/indeed with a kindled hearth in the middle and with a warm dining room accomplished/ effected, and with raging outdoors, throughout everything, hurricanes of wintry rains or, take what you wish, snow, and a solitary sparrow arriving will most speedily fly through the house; who when entering through one door, directly through another will go out. Certainly for that time itself during which it is inside, it is not touched by the weather of winter, but however with having hastened through the smallest interval of serenity toward an alteration/shift, soon from winter to winter returning, from your eyes it will slip away. Thus this life of men comes into sight for but a short time . . .”


¹ J. A. Giles ed., *The Complete Works of Venerable Bede* (London: Whittaker and Company, 1844)



Artist & Poet

**JENSON
LEONARD**

ELSEWHERE



WRITING ON **STUDIO**
VISITS WITH
GRADUATING
MASTER OF FINE
ARTS CANDIDATES AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE,
FROM **JANUARY 2021**



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2021 GRADUATES

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CARLISLE BELL

Potted Tree Stump

2021

Oil on Canvas
62" x 53"

CARLISLE BELL prefers to work quickly on multiple paintings at once, plucking figures out of 19th and 20th-century paintings and placing them into his own compositions to stage a kind of postmodernist recalibration.

A recent body of work translocates the woman from Édouard Manet's *Woman with a Parrot* (1866) for a series of triptychs. The woman is dissolved, removed from the painting and reduced to what is almost a silhouette of her dress. The pink dress floats against a dark aether, invoking the spaciousness of Francis Bacon.

Less a triptych, more a process in three parts...with this same gesture, Bell alludes to the impressionist and modernist "master" of yore, a closed network of European men making art for other European men...and he transmogrifies the image into something new. In this case, the dress sprouts into a phallic totem, thus focalizing the male gaze at the root of the original painting's foundation. Here, Bell arranges a slippage where the

newly remixed subject of the painting must reckon with the subject position of its original source.

To put it mildly, Bell lifts the dress of the muse in order to expose the western parasitism poking out from underneath it. Most recently a work-in-progress entitled *God Giving Life to Adam* depicts a plant in that same atemporal zone as the floating dresses. Here an ominous hand cursor icon hovers above.

During our virtual studio visit, I initially thought the cursor was on screen, not part of the composition. Bell, mindful of the increasing digital mediation of our lives and our art, knows his work will be seen online more than anywhere else.

New icons become entrenched with old ones. Bell's inquiry extends beyond art canons toward the assumptive logics that comprise graphic user interfaces.

The white hand hovers.



Potted Tree Stump over Gutter

2021

Oil on Canvas
67" x 55"







Potted Tree Stump at Night

2021

Oil on Canvas

67" x 62"

CARLISLE BELL



Potted Tree Stump at Night 2

2021

Oil on Canvas
67" x 53"



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ALFREDO CARLSON

If it weren't for **ALFREDO CARLSON's** insistence on wearing a Durag to class, and the senile white professor who failed him for wearing said Durag, we might be deprived of the artist's oeuvre altogether. From the ruins of that undergrad design class, Carlson would take up sculpture and soon discover his preternatural acuity for it. The rest, as they say and yet continually fail to acknowledge, is history.

Carlson, who was adopted from Haiti at age 10, commands a multi-hyphenate practice that extends across paintings, sculptures, drawings, and printmaking. His work ebbs toward figuration.

Last summer, spurred by his adoptive father's death, and the string of extra-judicial killings of black people, the artist crafted a triptych of works. Two paintings depict the artist's face with his left hand obscuring it, his face bearing an expression suspended between grief and agony. The third piece is sculptural, a disembodied torso writhing on the ground coated in a blackness beyond the arbitrary chroma of khaki skin tone; this is a nebulous shade of black, the kind so dark it simultaneously

presences and subordinates the precepts of color.

It's easy to identify in Carlson's portraiture the emotional register (yes, he is "angry"), or to associate his prostrate torso with over-circulated images of black death. Less easy, but just as important, is to sit with Carlson's representational work as a critique of the violence of representation itself, to understand it as visibilizing the idea of Frantz Fanon's "The Fact of Blackness."

Readings of Carlson's work inevitably come prefabricated with the superimposition of what blackness must always already be as well as the regime of white supremacist mythologia that orchestrates this fixity.

And yet Carlson's work depicts a blackness as scalable and expansive in its relation to the state apparatus as it is to the inner eye of the average museum-goer.

Representational sure, but never legible.

Blueberry

2021

Steel, Wood, Chicken Wire,
Burlap And Plaster
Bust 28in x 16in x 17in
Base 12in x 23in





ALFREDO CARLSON





Fragile

2021

Wood, Chicken Wire, Burlap And Plaster

Figure 32in x 15in x 20in

Base 37in x 43in x 13in



15W-40

2021

Wood, Chicken Wire, Burlap

And Plaster

Bust 22in x 19in x12in

Base 57in x 23in



Bruised

2021

Wood, Chicken Wire, Burlap

And Plaster

23in x 19in x 11in

Torn

2021

Great Stuff foam, aluminum wire, chicken
wire, burlap and plaster.

30in x 14.5in x 13in





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SR

D

During my studio visit with **SEBASTIEN R. DERENONCOURT** I learned that the Russian State department has a division dedicated to disseminating "interracial porn propaganda" across the Internet, because, of course it does.

Images of white women and black men engaged in sexual acts captioned with texts espousing the imminent erasure of the white race through interracial breeding and the extralogical sexual superiority of black men. A state-sanctioned misinformation campaign aimed at further hemorrhaging the racial animus at the core of white western polities.

In Derenoncourt's work, found images and research data function as metatext. The act of tracking geographic trends in search terms, keywords, and Internet queries illuminates the consumptive appetite of the white unconscious across the Mason Dixon, tracing the concomitant

strands of Negrophilia and Negrophobia so that we might come to understand the fecundity of their global antiblack genome. Consider Jared Sexton's notion of the libidinal economy, the symbolic order of white fears and desires cathected through black people's bodies.

Derenoncourt then is a libidinal economist of the highest order. Apocalypse is etymologically rooted in the Greek word *apokálypsis* which literally means "to uncover." A precondition of destruction is creation.

In Derenoncourt's work, I sense an apocalyptic ethos, the demand that we not abstract the mushroom cloud from its phallogocentric metaphor.

Untitled #3044
(Triggered Duality)

2019-21 S

tills from MultiChannel
Interactive Video Installation

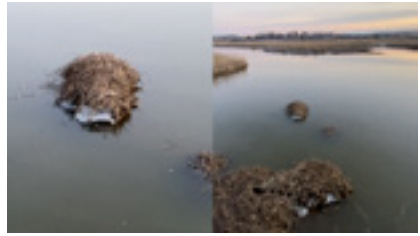
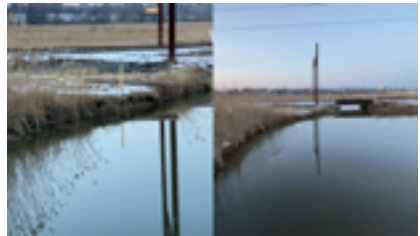
Marshlands have always held sway over me, whether in person or the written pages of Romain Gary or Twain, I have an instinctive attraction to these "wastelands".



Perhaps my Chinese zodiac sign, The "Water Ox" informs my being, or that I was born on an Island once surrounded by salt marshes, or maybe my ancestors were from the coasts of Guinea -in Africa,

I can't say, all I know is at their sight I feel wonder, relief, joy, but also sadness and frustration.

Wetlands everywhere are veering towards permanent destruction. A harbinger of things to come.



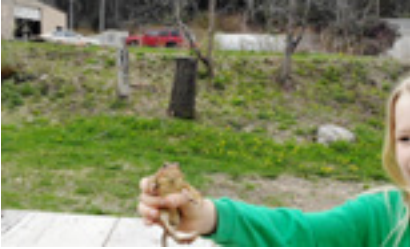
Du Bois's wilderness swamp, the Chickasawhatchee, is still not federally protected, despite its ecological importance as a habitat for endangered species, and its multiple hydrological functions.

The emotional distress of the country, stoked by the
aggressive, dangerous, wanton words and actions of Donald
Trump and his cronies -frustration, anger, despair and sadness,
quickly rising towards a fiery crescendo.

A mirror of the social unrest of the 60s, when white politicians
stoked the fears & prejudices of the majority, against the rising
political and economic powers, of urban minorities.

In drastic contrast, I was sharing precious times with my BFF, Grit;
building stronger bonds, creating memories and learning about
our verdant surroundings together.

While around the US protests and violence erupted
-A ritual steam letting of the "controlled" pressure cooker the
republic's systemic socioeconomic repression.



Untitled #1255

(A Brief Exploration of Time: The Life)

2020-21

Stills from Single Channel HD Video



I make my way through the city, bridled by the weight of the countless expectations, cries, pleading, struggle, of those around me; this while the guilt and shame of knowing that an exit, an out, an escape valve, was always at my finger tips.

In the bowels of the city, while commuting, habitually counting the needles littering the tracks at each subway stop, and later, while walking home. In every cleft of the sidewalk. Here and there, the protective orange caps roll about, tiny markers of all that pain surreptitiously masked by sardonic relief



Untitled #1255

(A Brief Exploration of Time: Millennia)

2020-21

Stills from Single Channel HD Video





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MICHAEL DELA DIKA



MICHAEL DIKA is only two years removed from his native Ghana, still acclimating to the United States, still trying to find balance.

The stability/precarity dichotomy looms large in Dika's install, sculptures are arranged on the edge of their pedestals, poised to topple yet still standing. The specter of delicate tension originates from Dika's relationship to labor and the bustle of the Ghanaian marketplaces of his youth.

In Ghana, items are often transported on the head, a practice called head-loading, a sort of cyborgian impulse where labor is not only performed by the body but augmented upon it.

The body converges with the vessel.

Dika's sculptures poeticize this relation, as clay is mutated into intestinal tracts, brain slush, body tissue, chains, bruises, and bodily secretions.

In an affront to gravity, Ghanaian workers tend to pile as much stuff on their heads as humanly possible, Dika mimics this tendency, carrying his sculptures atop his own head in an extended performance of the Ghanaian market, balancing not just the weight of his childhood, but the weight of a marketized art system.

Altogether, what are bodily assemblages if not corporations?

Dika's work explores the multivalences of the corporeal and the global, of physical labor and market primacy. Hito Steyerl theorizes the museum as a factory of affect, a site overdetermined by relentless productivity, a never-ending galaxy brain meme where labor becomes cognitivized at every level of abstraction.

How's that for head-loading?

King on Wheels

2021

Stoneware, Cone 6 Oxidation,
Surface Glaze
Car rim and Wheelbarrow
46in x 28in x 32.5in





Stacked on Stacks

2020

Stoneware, Cone 6 Oxidation,
Surface Glaze

Bricks

23in x 16in x 24in



Hybridity

2021

Earthenware, Cone 6 Oxidation,
Surface Glaze

Concrete Block

58in x 13in x 16in



Concussion

2020

Stoneware, Cone 6 Oxidation, Surface
Glaze
Fiber

62in x 9.5in x 31in

Trust your Guts

- Self Portrait

2021

Stoneware, Cone 6 Oxidation, Surface
Glaze

36.3in x 15in x 18in





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BRANDAN HENRY

In **BRANDAN HENRY**'s work, subjects are drawn with a machinic level of precision while still keeping a verve about them. My nerdy ass immediately clocked his style as something indebted to the artisanship found in Japanese comic books. When asked about the connection, I was delighted to learn that Henry's technique is heavily influenced by legendary AKIRA Mangaka, Katsuhiro Otomo. Unlike Otomo's sleek depictions of sci-fi militarism and extreme gore, Henry opts to mythologize the black quotidian.

Hailing from Wilmington, Delaware, Henry's drawings (primarily charcoal) highlight the black folk of his hometown mid-perseverance, mid-countenance, mid-minding their black-ass business. Henry evinces a black sociality, one wrapped in Wilmington's history of race riots, latter-day civil rights protests, and his own musings on the shelf life of black childhood innocence.

With his *Broken Home* series, the artist's daughter becomes a node for reflections on domesticity and intergenerational

trauma. His daughter is seen playing "house" with a friend, the children's bodies contrasted against miniaturized homes composed with as much detail as homes you'd likely find in real Wilmington, just scaled down to the size of child playthings.

In another work, the children sit lotus position across from one another, their hands clasped together and eyes shut. Henry captures the children carving out sacral space, either convening with the ancestors or the gods of high fructose corn syrup. Across Henry's work subjects are foregrounded, if not altogether engulfed by white negative space.

His newer works emphasize dialogue through objects. One drawing contains a dining table flanked by six chairs. The six chairs recall the visages of six pallbearers around a casket, the familial qua the funerary. Lest we forget, enslaved Africans arrived in this country as objects.



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Untitled

2021

Charcoal, marker, and Watercolor

on stretched paper

24in x 18in x 7.8in

BRANDAN HENRY

The Viewer

2021

Charcoal on stretched paper

18in x 18in x 7.8in



Sour Grapes

2021

Charcoal and oil pastel on
stretched paper
18in x 18in x 7.8in





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**GENE
ANTHONY
SANTIAGO-
HOLT**

GENE ANTHONY SANTIAGO-HOLT works across multiple mediums, including but not limited to ancestral trauma.

Living in the messy slippage that comes with being a White-passing Puerto Rican, he uses sound and video to construct a hazy multi-gestalt as fragmented and incalculable as the racial taxonomies that seek to erase and totalize him. Digital circulation and compression mirror this forgotten historical memory—call it a “telefiliation”.

Santiago-Holt mines the archival strands of relatives never met, and Facebook albums of scans of family scrapbook photos, unlatched from their Puerto Rican provenance, are rendered into phantasms.

These found objects/materials become haunted as black and white family photos

are remixed and distorted in Microsoft Paint and open-source gif creation tools, and the faces of patriarchs are obscured by radiant, bestial masks. What might first seem like playful apparitions mined from a 90's Saturday morning cartoon reveal a deep-rooted espiritismo, more in accordance with the color palette and figuration of Taino and Carib visualect, perhaps spectral visitations from Santiago-Holt's lineal past.

Under his Moyogash persona, Santiago-Holt soundtracks his visuals to the thrashing tremolo of his self-produced power electronics, inducing nothing less than bass-driven hauntology.

Out of a noise music idiom these durational video pieces exact the sweat-drenched religiosity of a Santeria priestess, or hell, a Catholic mass.

What is more White-passing than a ghost?



Don't Pick Up The Phone

2020

Still, from single channel video
Various Dimensions



Pelo Loco Disjointed Witch

2021

Still, from single channel video
Various Dimensions



Celebrate Know Each Other

2021

Still, from single channel video
Various Dimensions



Boy in Black Hat

2020

Still, from single channel video
Various Dimensions



JACK-O-MOYO: "Meet my House, My Dead Dog, I have a Phone Call" *(Full Episode)*

2021

Still, from single channel video

Various Dimensions



JACK-O-MOYO: "Pilot" (Full Episode)

2021

Still, from single channel video

Various Dimensions



JACK-O-MOYO: "WHAT WRONG WIT TV PT.1"

2021

Still, from single channel video
Various Dimensions



DO YOU COWARDS EVEN NOISE?

2021

JPEG
Various Dimensions

The Web

2020

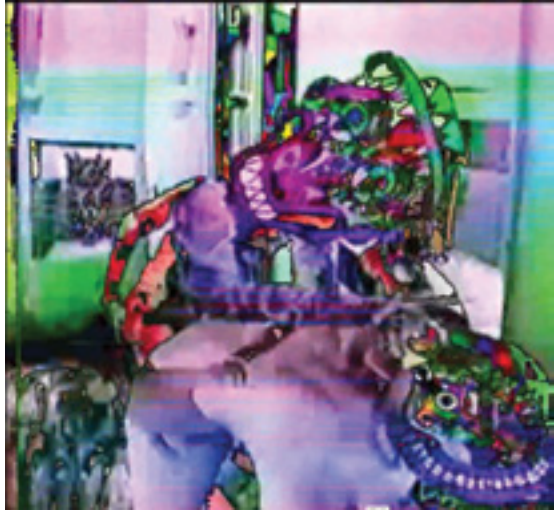
Still, from single channel video
Various Dimensions



JACK-O-MOYO:
""Pilot" - "Glitchy Sex"
(Full Episode)

2021

Still, from single channel video
Various Dimensions



Performance Mask (*Saint Judas Iscariot*)

2021

Paper maché, Acrylic paint, Harness equipment
14in x 8in x 4in

Performance Mask (*JACK-O-MOYO*)

2021

Paper maché, Acrylic paint, Harness equipment
15in x 10in x 3in

Performance Mask (*Slipknot Rip-off Pinocchio Nose Taino Spirit*)

2021

Paper maché, Acrylic paint, Harness equipment
12in x 11in x 14in





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CONNOR

LONGO

CONNOR LONGO's works rely on the viewer's satirical literacy, what art historian Richard J Powell describes as one's "satiracy," in order to discern the puzzle of meanings embedded within them. How informed the viewer is to the work's cultural and theoretical referents serves to heighten the ocularity of the work and the margins of its ecstatic reading(s).

Longo constructs a self-probing visual satire that aims its critical ire upon its own gaze. The artist looks to contend with whiteness, which in essence, is to contend with the history of the United States, its status quos, and its overarching institutions.

He is endeavoring a kind of bastardized Kerry James Marshall stratagem: not to render historically underrepresented black subjects, but to depict whiteness from outside its assumed historically

transcendent norm. Longo deploys white paint straight from the tube, crude and congealed—whiteness itself gets taken up as raw materiality.

One painting depicts a floating melanated hand holding a glass of ice water, or are those melting polar ice caps, or the broken shards of a white subconscious?

Form and perspective are collapsed into the realm of the surreal. The usual culprits are all here—police officers, bureaucrats, MAGA cultists, and lady liberty—now approximated into grotesque mascots of racial capitalism.

Longo, in his volition to tackle the enormity of the white supremacy question, is destined to stumble, but, to borrow a phrase from his work, "at least his third eye is open."

The White Defense

2021

Oil on Canvas

63 3/4in x 79 1/4in x 1 1/2in



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Judith and Holofernes

2021

Oil on Canvas

52 1/2in x 72 1/4in x 1in

CONNOR LONGO

On the Rocks

2020

Oil on Canvas

53 1/4in x 62 1/4in x 1in



John The Baptist

2021

Oil on Canvas

48in x 72in x 3 1/2in







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HAMILTON PEDRICK

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HAMILTON PEDRICK



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HAMILTON PEDRICK





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Lens Media:

Amy Hicks

Priscilla Smith

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René Marquez

Peter Williams

Lance Winn

Print Making:

Aaron Terry

Sculpture:

David Meyer

Gregory Shelnut

Theory & Writing:

Lance Winn

Talia Greene



SUPPORTIVE

Lance Winn

Professor

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I was in Cincinnati for an opening on March 6th, 2020, when I received a call from our Chair, Greg Shelnut, discussing the virus (*not yet called a "pandemic"*) and whether we should continue to plan on the MFA's annual trip to Berlin on March 26th. I was in communication with our contact in Berlin and was told that no one was concerned there... It is impossible to imagine, a year later, that we were ever actually contemplating a trip to Germany.

By the next Wednesday I was meeting with our MFA's about moving to remote teaching and the University was shutting down. We worked to get our grads access to their studios, and when permission came, the state had been shut down. When we found that the University was going to close its spaces, our grads were given a moment to retrieve supplies for, what we imagined, would be a couple of weeks before they would be able to regain access their studios.

Several months later; after figuring out how to turn in-person art classes into remote education, pivoting over Spring "Break"; after figuring out how one might teach material processes while everyone was in lockdown, materials scarce and space at a premium; after we had wrapped up the end of a grueling and exhausting semester; after the loss of so many lives, including those close to our students; we came together one more time to mourn and talk about the senseless killing of George Floyd, and so many other black men and women—fortified in our commitment to,

and recognition that, Black Lives Matter. And we have been making our way since then, meeting remotely, coming together on-line, and whenever possible, in person, for conversation and critique. The grads have mastered Zoom and Canvas (*the app, not necessarily the material*), have uploaded their work for review, and, like so many, have found new ways of working and communicating.

This group has been incredibly resilient, incredibly supportive of one another, and has remained incredibly durable during the vast ups and downs of the last two years. They have (*literally and figuratively*) picked each other up (*and sometimes have dropped each other off*) when colleagues were suffering. They have helped each other, and our incoming MFA's, to navigate online teaching and learning and they have talked openly about and used the immensely complicated socio-political realities of a global pandemic and a national crisis, on so many levels, to motivate their work and drive their diverse practices. Through it all they have remained committed to their art and to developing their thinking, even as the way forward seems, at best, more uncertain than ever.

I feel privileged to have been allowed to accompany them on a journey that I think all of us would have rather not taken, and inspired by the group's compassion, thoughtfulness, and veracity over the course of the last years.

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR GREAT BENEFACTORS & FRIENDS

With their grace and thoughtful actions they helped us weather these difficult times and got us here to the finish line! We are blessed to have had them in our camp.

JCAD

GREGG SILVIS

ROBERT & CHRISTINE STRAIGHT

MINORI THORPE

GREGORY SHELNUTT

& ELLEN GARDINER

AND

FROM THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEAN

JOHN PELESKO

ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR THE ARTS

SUZANNE BURTON



LAYOUT, DESIGN & ILLUSTRATIONS, SÉBASTIEN DERENONCOURT/
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Department of
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