What do you get when you mix history, art, and contemporary art, and political issues? Visit downtown Greenfield on Saturday, October 10 from 2 p.m. to midnight and you’ll find out. This fall, downtown Greenfield will be transformed into a temporary art district as site of the An International Video Art Festival: Greenfield’s Historic Buildings. It’s a unique opportunity to experience more than 50 video works by 25 artists from across the country and globe to explore the historic buildings near the intersection of Main Street and Bank Row. The festival will include video art installations in seven different buildings, a panel discussion with exhibiting artists, a flip-book animation workshop for children between 7 and 12 years old, an exhibit of GCC students’ video art, and a party with live music in the evening. The festival is a collaboration between Conjunction Arts and Greenfield Community College, the Greenfield Business Association, building owners, local businesses and the Mayor’s Office. The festival is curated by Natasia Becker, Mollie Assante-Duran and Alixa Bynoe, Assistant Academic Program, at the Clark Art Institute. All Festival events on the site are open to the public.

The Greenfield Business Association will create signage on the Greenfield Common (Court Square) with maps, schedules, and information.

Greenfield Community College President Bob Pura, Art Department Chair Paul Linda, and Associate Dean of Humanities Lee Lang-Currie have been instrumental in helping turn video artist and Greenfield historic building owner Bradley McClelland’s video for an international video festival into reality. Linda said, “This is perhaps an unparalleled opportunity to see many video art works from one location at one time and in one place, and for GCC students to exhibit video work alongside that of professional artists. We are welcoming art students to help run the festival, providing them with critical experience in exhibition preparation, set up, break down, and as guests at the various venues we expect that students and faculty from area colleges and universities will also attend the festival.”

Bradley McClelland, owner of the Abercrombie Building on Bank Row, sees the festival as an opportunity for discovery. He said, “Festival-goers get to experience video art as a medium, to get familiar with the idea that artists explore, and an opportunity to discover ideas that reflect on the importance of the historic buildings, including the First National Bank, the Abercrombie Building, and others. There is a reassurance about Greenfield – Greenfield has the potential to become a cultural center. We need landmarks, landmarks and landmarks in the downtown of Greenfield. This festival will show that contemporary artists are welcome in Greenfield.”

In the many rooms, courtyards, and open spaces of these buildings will be video art, short pieces and longer pieces, running on continuous loops so viewers can move between the spaces and step into watching a work at any point. Festival Curator Natasia Becker said, "Video art is about exploring boundaries. This is what makes it attractive to me and why I wanted to do a video art festival. The artists have selected are all about exploring boundaries. Ric Gair, ‘Historian’s Lessons’ (2006) and the collaborative partner Bradley McClelland and Jacqueline Why’s ‘Within Our Gates’ (2006). The festival works, or different works, run continuously from 2 p.m. and about the past and their power in the present. Michel Hirtler and Hillary Mushkin talk on a more current issue, that of the U.S. war in Iraq, in their video work. Other works, by Lucas Michael or Kenny Elger, probe the formation of identity and the boundaries of our sexual orientations. There is also work that explores the politics of urban space, as in Jonathan Lee’s video about the projects in New York City, and work that explores the crossing of boundaries, as in Sam Williamson’s video about African immigrants coming to South Africa in search of opportunities.”

GCC’s Associate Dean of Humanities Lee Lang-Currie, reflected on the importance of the festival. He said, “Creativity is crucial in any endeavor; we all need to be flexible and open to new things. The festival happening in Greenfield at this particular time is all about possibilities, openness, and opportunity. It is a fantastic opportunity for the College and the community.”

For information, visit the festival website created by Paul Linda at http://www.gcf.org or contact Astrid George, GCC Business Association at 413-775-2791. 

Greenfield Community College
One College Drive
Greenfield, Massachusetts 01301
On the Web at gcc.mass.edu

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Alum Spotlight
GCC Art Student to GCC Art Instructor

By Mary McCintock, BC

In 1998, when Allisson Sexton started her first semester as a student at Greenfield Community College, she had just graduated from Greenfield High School and thought perhaps she’d study painting. Now, Allisson is an adjunct professor at GCC, teaching Introduction to Photography, the course that launched her career as a photographer who applied to New York City, and had her images featured in an international exhibit in the Czech Republic. What happened in the past 10 years to bring Allisson back to teach at GCC?

After high school, Allisson planned to attend Maine College of Art, but decided to attend GCC where her brother, James Nolton, 1997 graduate, spoke highly of the GCC Art Department. Allisson remembers a student in her year taking an Introduction to Photography class. Watching a slide show of images, she felt a strong physical response to what she could make about her life. Although she loved the art of her class, photography became her chosen medium.

After two years at GCC, Allisson transferred to California College of the Arts and completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2001. Following a year spent photographing in the South, Allisson studied for a Masters of Fine Arts at Yale University. She submitted some of the images she created at GCC as part of her application to Yale. In 2004, with her MFA, Allisson moved to North Carolina. She worked as an artist’s assistant and continued to create photography, but she wanted to return to western Massachusetts and settled after the opportunity to teach at GCC became available. The fall is her second semester teaching Introduction to Photography.

Allisson’s photography pulls from many different sources. Allisson said, “Realizing that my experience as a student at GCC is a particularly important influence on my work. I push myself to give my students an experience similar to what I had at GCC. My experience of GCC opened up doors I couldn’t have imagined, and filled my mind with many ideas. Now all of my former professors, I find the art faculty to be extremely supportive. It is wonderful to work with colleagues who have a strong sense of who I am as an artist and now as a teacher.”

The past five years through July, Allisson’s images were featured in a "Newest of New York" section of the Prague Biennale an international exhibit at the Prague Biennale. Allison is more than just a teacher for her students, she’s a mentor who has a strong sense of who I am as an artist and now as a teacher.

On the Web at gcc.mass.edu

Upcoming Events

Choose a Calling, Not a Career… Careers In Law

Tuesday, September 29, 12 Noon
North 332, Plan Campus

Cecil Gray received his JD from Northeastern University School of Law. Current practice as an associate at GCT. He has legal experience in public policy work, with the Corporation for Public Service, "A Nation in Action’s Public Interest Law, Criminal Justice Clinic and he served as New Hampshire Public Defender. She will be discussing career opportunities related to law. Contact, 413-775-1039.

Astrid Sheckels Exhibit

October 6 - November 5, 2009, South Gallery

A selection of new works are currently on display at Astrid Sheckels. Gallery Talk

October 7, 2009, South Gallery, 12 - 1 pm

Book Signing

October 8, 2009, South Gallery, 5 - 7 pm

Astrid will be answering the many, many questions about her book.

GCC Foundation 41st Annual Meeting

Thursday, October 8, 2009 (50 Federal Street)

Hers dunes 2:30 - 4:30 pm, Dinner 4:15 pm

Frederick Spencer • Michael G. Page • Ufford Desmond

"The State of the State: The Economic and Fiscal Outlook for Massachusetts" Program following dinner: 5:00, 2010 budget presentation person.

RSVP by September 28 to Andrea Carlock, Carlock@gcc.mass.edu, 413-775-1600

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