continued

In the 1960s five area designations were established along media lines and faculty were added. Katherine E. Nash was appointed to the faculty in 1962. As a female sculptor she was an inspiration for women art students. Her influence remains today in the Katherine Nash Gallery, and in the students she inspired. Wayne Potratz came to the sculpture area in the last year of the decade and took over the foundry. Sculptors KINJI AKAGAWA and JUD NELSON were students during this decade.

In the early 1960s Peter Busa, described by some critics as a pioneer of modern art, came from New York to infuse the drawing and painting curriculum with ideas formed through his close association with abstract expressionists Jackson Pollock, Robert Motherwell, Hans Hoffman, and others. He was joined by Herman Rowan, Raymond Hendler, and Lynn Gray. Karl Bethke and Zigmunds Priede provided new energy to the printmaking area that had been pioneered by Malcolm Myers. During this decade artists RICHARD HAAS, HARMONY HAMMOND, DOUG OHLSON, and STEVEN BIGLER studied with the painters.

In the decade of the 1970s, Victor Caglioti, George Morrison, Herman Somberg, William Roode, David Feinberg and Thomas Cowette arrived to teach drawing and painting, which was fast becoming the largest media area in the department. Guy Baldwin, Thomas Rose, and Susan Lucey provided new directions for the sculpture area. Jerald Krepps joined the printmaking area. Strong painters with a national voice, such as THOMAS EVANS, BILL JENSEN, and ROCHELLE FEINSTEIN, were trained at the University during this decade, as were artists who have established their reputations in various media, such as STUART NIELSEN and STEVEN SORMAN. ANN LEDY, known for her drawings, graduated during the 1970s, as did printmakers MARCIA SCANLON, BILL GOLDSN and STEVEN ANDERSEN, who are renown in the print world. During this decade JEFF MILLIKAN studied photography in the renewed photo area led by Gary Hallman and Jim Henkel. Hallman and Henkel’s area produced photographer JOHN SCHLESINGER in the 1980s. ANDREW LEICESTER, whose public artwork is located around the world, also came out of the department during this decade. His work can be seen on campus year round—the Platonic Figure near the mechanical engineering building on the east bank campus.

Since the 1980s the strong new voices of women artists such as Joyce Lyon and Diane Katsiaficas were added to the faculty in the drawing and painting area. JULIA SCHER, conceptual and performance artist, and painter MARJORIE MIKASEN graduated in the 1980s. The 1990s saw the addition of Clarence Morgan and Alexis Kuhr to drawing and painting.

The two youngest artists in the alumni show are sculptor/book/installation artist KAREN WIRTH, who graduated in 1990, and photographer PETER LOWE, who received his MFA in 2001.

Artist faculty members start their students on paths to artistic success—the artists in this exhibition manifest that influence. Artists who are also teachers are sparks, catalysts, and challengers. Their ways of seeing and being in the world provide their students, and everyone at our University and in our community, with immeasurably precious diversity. Although this exhibition is about successful artist alumni of the Department of Art, it is also a tribute to the faculty who started them—and many others—on their paths to success.

Lyndel King
Director and Chief Curator
Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many individuals have contributed to the organization and planning of this exhibition. Members of the Nash Gallery exhibition committee played an important role by supporting the initial premise of this curatorial project. Nicholas Shank, Director of the Katherine E. Nash Gallery, was instrumental in keeping the enthusiasm for this project on the “front-burner” at a time when much of our attention was focused on the new building.

Steven Rosenstone, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, must be acknowledged for his steadfast and spirited support of the arts and humanities within the College, University and community. His vision and commitment to building the College of Liberal Arts into a world-class research environment has ignited the spirit of creativity and spearheaded groundbreaking work in the arts. As a member of the faculty and the department’s Chair, I appreciate the College’s support and commitment. Likewise, I am deeply touched by the continued support of the Friends of the Department of Art over the years. Without their passionate interest and belief in the transformative power of art to change the world, such projects as Looking Back and Moving Forward would not be possible.

The staff of the Department of Art and the Katherine E. Nash Gallery were especially important and, once again, demonstrated efficiency and the highest level of professionalism in handling the logistics of this project. Evonne Lindberg and Shaylyn Bernhardt supplied administrative expertise in every phase of the exhibition planning process, including communication with the participating artists. Nicholas Shank and his gallery staff managed the many details of securing, transporting, and installing the work. Chris Deo, Installation Coordinator, and the student interns he supervises provided flexible thinking, aesthetic judgment, and problem solving skills that were indispensable in a project of this scope. The collective talents of these individuals came together to give form and structure to this project. I am extremely grateful to have such gifted and resourceful people in the Department of Art working on behalf of this project.

The artists in this exhibition have been a model of cooperation and inspiration. I am truly indebted to them for agreeing to participate. Their work has made Looking Back and Moving Forward: success in the making possible.

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:
- Kinji Akagawa MFA 1969
- Steven Andersen BFA 1972
- Steven Bigler MFA 1969
- Thomas Evans MFA 1969
- Rochelle Feinstein MFA 1979
- Bill Goldston MFA 1971
- Richard Haas MFA 1964
- Harmony Hammond BA 1967
- Bill Jensen MFA 1970
- Ann Ledy BFA 1974
- Andrew Leicester MFA 1973
- Peter Lowe MFA 2001
- Marjorie Mikasen BA 1981
- Jeff Millikan MFA 1974
- Jud Nelson BS 1969
- Stuart Nielsen BFA 1970
- Doug Ohlson BA 1961
- James Rosenquist AA 1954
- Marcia Scanlon MFA 1970
- Julia Scher MFA 1984
- John Schlesinger BA 1980
- Steven Sorman BFA 1971
- Karen Wirth MFA 1990

For information about supporting the Nash Gallery and Dept. of Art programs go to http://artdept.umn.edu
Looking Back & Moving Forward:
success in the making

An invitational exhibition featuring work by Department of Art alumni

January 11 – February 17, 2005

Katherine E. Nash Gallery
Department of Art
Regis Center for Art
University of Minnesota

participating artists

Kinji Akagawa James Rosenquist Steven Andersen Thomas Evans Steven Bigler
Bj Akagawa Thomas Evans Steven Bigler Rochelle Feinstein Kinji Akagawa Bill Goldston
Bill Goldston Doug Ohlson Richard Haas Bill Jensen Harmony Hammond
Son Steven Sorman Bill Jensen Harmony Hammond Ann Ledy Andrew Leicester
andy Andrew Leicester Karen Wirth Peter Lowe Jud Nelson Marjorie Mikasen Doug
edy Steven Andersen Jeff Millikan Marjorie Mikasen Jud Nelson Doug Ohlson Jam
son Stuart Nielsen Bill Jensen Doug Ohlson Marcia Scanlon James Rosenquist Joh
enquist Julia Scher Marcia Scanlon John Schlesinger Julia Scher Karen Wirth Kin
Scher John Schlesinger Peter Lowe Steven Sorman Kinji Akagawa Karen Wirth St
As with most curated, group exhibitions the task of selecting the artists can be fraught with many difficult decisions—including several that expose significant weaknesses in the curator’s original premise. This has been exactly my experience as the curator of Looking Back and Moving Forward: success in the making. However, vulnerabilities aside, if there were ever a labor of love this would most surely qualify.

The curatorial premise of this exhibition began quite naively thirty-six months ago as the Department of Art faculty, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, students, alumni and long-time friends of the department focused their attention on the planning and building of a new art teaching and creative research facility on the Twin Cities Campus. This new facility would replace the substandard conditions the department occupied for more than thirty years.

As the realization of the new building for the Department of Art became a physical reality and the interest in elevating the status and educational value of the arts and humanities on campus spread—thanks in large measure to the vision, leadership and support from Steven Rosenstone, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts—it became clear that the department’s program had finally turned the corner and positioned itself for the future. However, while directing programmatic attention to address the 21st century, it seemed equally important to look back and make links to the past. Looking Back and Moving Forward: success in the making is an attempt to bridge two periods of the department’s history and acknowledge the long tradition of individual successes and career accomplishments of those from years past, whose educational
development and artistic proficiencies have been partially shaped by studying at the University of Minnesota and working with faculty in the Departments of Studio Art and Art History.

The Department of Art was, indeed, fortunate to have such a distinguished group of artists who agreed to accept our invitation and participate in this special occasion. Although the list of distinguished artists could have easily been expanded, it was necessary to limit our selection because of budget constraints and gallery space. I regret that more alumni from the past could not be included, and take full responsibility for any curatorial shortsightedness.

Therefore, the artists in this exhibition represent a small measure of our program’s significance and contributions to the professional field of practice over the past thirty years. The foundation for future success looks equally promising for a cohort of more recent alumni, current studio majors and graduate students. The department’s rising visibility, reputation and stature as a place to nurture the creative spirit and simultaneously provide challenging and thought provoking instruction in the arts, continues.

Clarence Morgan
Professor and Chair
Department of Art
University of Minnesota
Regis Center for Art

DOUG OHILSON
MEAN GREEN, 2003
acrylic on canvas
60” x 62”
Looking Back and Moving Forward: success in the making presents the work of Department of Art alumni—the first time their work will be exhibited in the wonderful new Regis Center for Art, which opened fall 2003. This exhibit recognizes the creativity and success of former students and faculty from many decades, and includes artwork by alums from the 1950s to 2001, selected by Department Chair Clarence Morgan. This exhibit does not, however, include the department’s strong ceramics area and the more recent area of time & interactivity.

A brief history of the department by decades, paired with the artists who were students at that time, follows. It will allow a look at the art in this exhibit in light of the work of faculty who were the intellectual and artistic guides for these artists in the formative years of their careers. Because the ceramics and time & interactivity areas are not represented in the exhibit, they are not included in this brief history.

The University first offered formal art classes in the 1920s but it was not until 1946, after an influx of new students following World War II, that class offerings in the visual arts were consolidated into a real art department. H. H. Arnason, who later became well known nationally for his books on modern art, was chair of the consolidated department in 1947, which included studio art, art history, and art education.

In the 1940s artists who are now beloved in the history of art in Minnesota were added to the art faculty. They included painters Josephine Lutz Rollins, Walter Quirt, Bernard Arnest, and Cameron Booth; sculptor John Rood; printmaker Malcolm Myers; and photographers Allen Downs and Jerome Liebling, among others. All these artists have left their mark on the University and our community, and on the students who studied with them.

In 1950 the Master of Fine Arts program was established and a decade later, in the mid 1960s, studio arts and art history became two separate departments. A Bachelor of Fine Arts degree was established to respond to the growing enrollment in art classes.

James Rosenquist, a North Dakota native, studied painting at the University in the 1950s with Cameron Booth. Although he did not receive a degree from the University of Minnesota, Rosenquist has always paid homage to Booth. Rosenquist said in a February 2004 Art In America interview with Michael Amy: “I was probably born with the ability to draw, but that does not make you an artist. My first teacher, Cameron Booth at the University of Minnesota . . . taught picture making, dynamic picture making, including Cubism—ideas about form and fragments and everything else.”

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