

## DEPARTMENT HAPPENINGS



Paintings by MFA Candidate, Laura Lemna

### Annual BFA, MFA & BA Thesis Exhibition

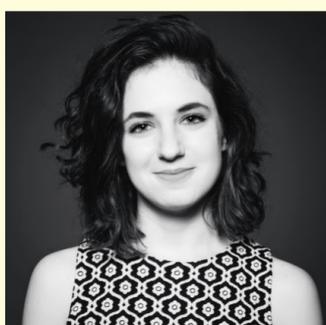
The Department of Art, Art History & Design celebrated the annual MFA, BFA, and BA Student Exhibition in the Snite Museum and in the Art Gallery of O'Shaughnessy Hall with an opening reception on April 7, 2017. These exhibits showcase the creative work and thesis projects of thirty-one graduating BA, BFA, and MFA degree students in studio art and design. The thesis project represents a year-long investigation involving research and production demonstrating our student's unique ability to express complex concepts and themes, and applying various strategies and processes that are individual to their particular disciplines in design and studio art. The exhibits will be open through Sunday, May 21.

### Senior Design Night, Chicago

The second annual Senior Design Show & Professional Night hosted by Doblin Group, a Chicago-based consultancy firm, took place April 20th, 2017. The event featured Notre Dame's Industrial Design and Visual Communication Design students with approximately 150 in attendance, including family members, friends, design alumni, and design professionals in the greater Chicago area. The event provided senior design majors with the opportunity to present their work to design professionals, intellectually engage with experts unfamiliar with their work, and build industry connections with the attendees.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



### Student Award Winners

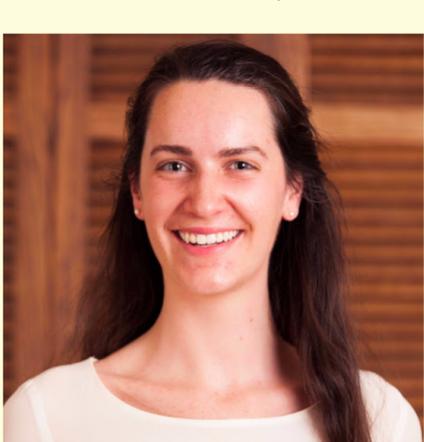
The Snite Museum of Art awarded the Walter Beardsley Award for best in show at the graduate level to printmaking MFA, Elena Smyrniotis (above, left) for her thesis project, *Horizons of Utopia*. With influences of cartography and topography, her work focuses on the visual representation of utopia and dystopia, as well as the metaphor of space.

The Emil Jacques Gold and Silver Medals for Excellence are the oldest and most prestigious departmental distinctions that can be awarded to undergraduate students. Each year, the faculty awards the two most outstanding undergraduate senior BFA students based on academic excellence, leadership, citizen to the department, and studio achievement.

Mary Kate Healey (above, center) was the recipient of the Gold Medal. Her thesis project is titled *Stitches: Sewing their Stories of Sexual Violence*. *Stitches* uses the history of domestic craft to tell the anonymous stories of sexual violence at Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College. The materiality explores themes of gender and intimacy, as well as creating a platform for collaboration and empowerment between survivors and allies.

Gabriela Leskur (above, right) received the Silver Medal. Her thesis project is titled *Invisible Pain*. The project takes personal accounts of invisible pain and brings them to life through performative video art that helps to build empathy and understanding to illness and disorders like depression, cystic fibrosis, and OCD.

Please see our website for a complete list of the [2017 award winners](#).



### Curating Sculpture Installation in Ireland

Art history senior, Isabel Cabezas, will be traveling to Ireland through the Keough-Naughton Irish Internship Programme to curate a 20-piece show of the German-born Irish sculptor, Imogen Stuart. With the internship based in Dublin, Cabezas will shadow Stuart at her studio during the summer for a better understanding of her work before the exhibitions begin. After learning more about Stuart as an artist, Cabezas will move to Connemara where the exhibitions will take place. She will have two shows in County Galway: the first at Kylemore Abbey in mid-September and at the other will be located at the 40th Clifden Arts Festival from 14 - 24 September.

## FACULTY NEWS

### Electric Funeral: Jason Lahr

Assistant Professor of Painting and Drawing, Jason Lahr, exhibited his most recent body of work at the Painting Center in New York City from March 28 - April 22. Painted on polygon-shaped panels, Lahr combines darkly comic texts with appropriated images, creating shifting narratives of working class male identity, especially from Generation X. His work draws from feminism, narrative theory, contemporary and postmodern fiction, semiotics, and film theory to explore the formation and shaping of masculinity through mass culture. The images are pulled from a wide range of popular and sub-cultural ephemera while the texts are fragments that suggest their excision from a larger story and give the reader/viewer flashbulb glimpses at moments of narrative action. Centering on female characters that occupy positions of authority and male characters who are injured, inept, defeated, or perplexed by their dealings with women, the texts and images form narratives which question the wash of expectations and assumptions we experience and create through popular culture.



### Brian Edlefsen Receives iF DESIGN AWARD

Assistant professor of Visual Communication Design, Brian Edlefsen, was recently awarded an iF DESIGN AWARD by Germany's oldest design organization, Hannover-based iF International Forum Design GmbH. His winning project, Herman Miller Hangtags, won in the Communications discipline, in the Corporate Identity/Branding category. The award recognizes Edlefsen for his "systemic, user-friendly approach to conveying complicated information" using hang tags attached to furniture to show how to make adjustments, as well as to provide information online for people who prefer to use a computer or a smartphone. Edlefsen did the award-winning work through Thesis, Inc., the design consultancy he co-founded in St. Joseph, Michigan. The prizes are reviewed by a 58-member jury, made up of independent experts from all over the world, with over 5,500 entries from 59 countries. The iF DESIGN AWARD is one of the most important design prizes in the world. Submissions are awarded in the following disciplines: Product, Packaging, Communication and Service Design, Architecture and Interior Architecture as well as Professional Concepts.

You can learn more about Professor Edlefsen's award-winning design by visiting the [iF WORLD DESIGN GUIDE](#) website.

### Neeta Verma Appointed

#### Inaugural Robert P. Sedlack Jr. Chair

Professor Neeta Verma has been appointed the first Robert P. Sedlack Jr. Chair in Visual Communication Design by John McGreevy, Dean of the College of Arts and Letters. The three-year appointment honors the life and work of the late Art, Art History & Design professor, Robert Sedlack. The appointment is awarded to Professor Verma for her outstanding work as a scholar, teacher, and citizen of the university.



## ALUMNI STORIES

### ArtCurious: Art History-Themed Podcast

Jennifer Dasal, (M.A. Art History, '04) has created an art & art history-themed podcast titled *ArtCurious*. Dasal launched *ArtCurious* last summer and releases new episodes every two weeks. "I'm hoping to give more of an interesting spin to art history," Dasal says, putting historical stories in a modern-day context and weaving in interesting parallels and side notes. For example, "the very first episode that I did was about the thefts/forges/possible falsehood of the Mona Lisa-- that actually stemmed from a story that I heard from one of my professors at the University of California, Davis, where I did my undergraduate work. She was convinced that the Mona Lisa on view at the Louvre was fake. I thought that was such a strange idea, so I wanted to dig into the work's background (particularly in the 20th century) and learn more. And that started it all." This month she'll discuss physician proposed medical diagnoses of figures depicted in art. Dasal is Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, North Carolina.

[Click here](#) for the full story on *ArtCurious*.



**Thinking and Making** is published by the department of Art, Art History & Design.

Send comments to the Department at [Art@ND.edu](mailto:Art@ND.edu). For more information about the department, visit our web site at [artdept.nd.edu](http://artdept.nd.edu).

