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waking up the arts



A Year in Review

Photograph by Jada Weedon '23

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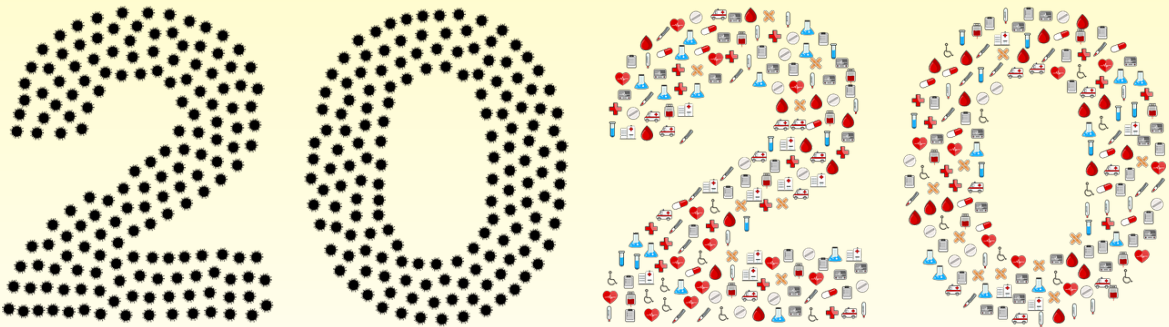
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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

2020 was a year that no one expected. From a global pandemic that took the lives of many – and quite literally almost shut down our lives – to another rallying cry to fight for social justice, that was sparked by the unjust deaths of innocents, to one of our most important elections, which tested the limits of what our country stands for. The year of 2020 was a year of adversity, but also a show of extreme strength, resilience and expression through art.

Even in quarantine and the midst of protests, the wonders that make up what we know as art stood out. From pictures, paintings and more on how quarantine life was for society to the murals and signs created by those marching in solidarity of justice and equality, art brought people together, especially in a time when we were apart. In the same manner, despite all the changes the pandemic wrought on our campus, arts organizations still managed to make sure to do something – though at times difficult – to keep waking up the arts at Albright, and in the world.

It was hard, but we survived 2020. I hope that as you read the stories and see the art reflecting the past year, you will know the strength we have as human beings, and the beauty of how we can express it in the most wonderful forms. Let's go through 2021 with open hearts and a willingness to always Wake Up the Arts!

~Deborah Afolabi '21
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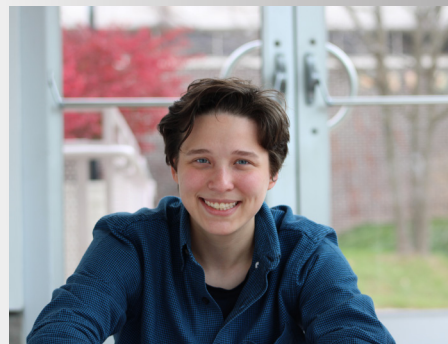
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Filming in Reading: “Dust Nuggets”

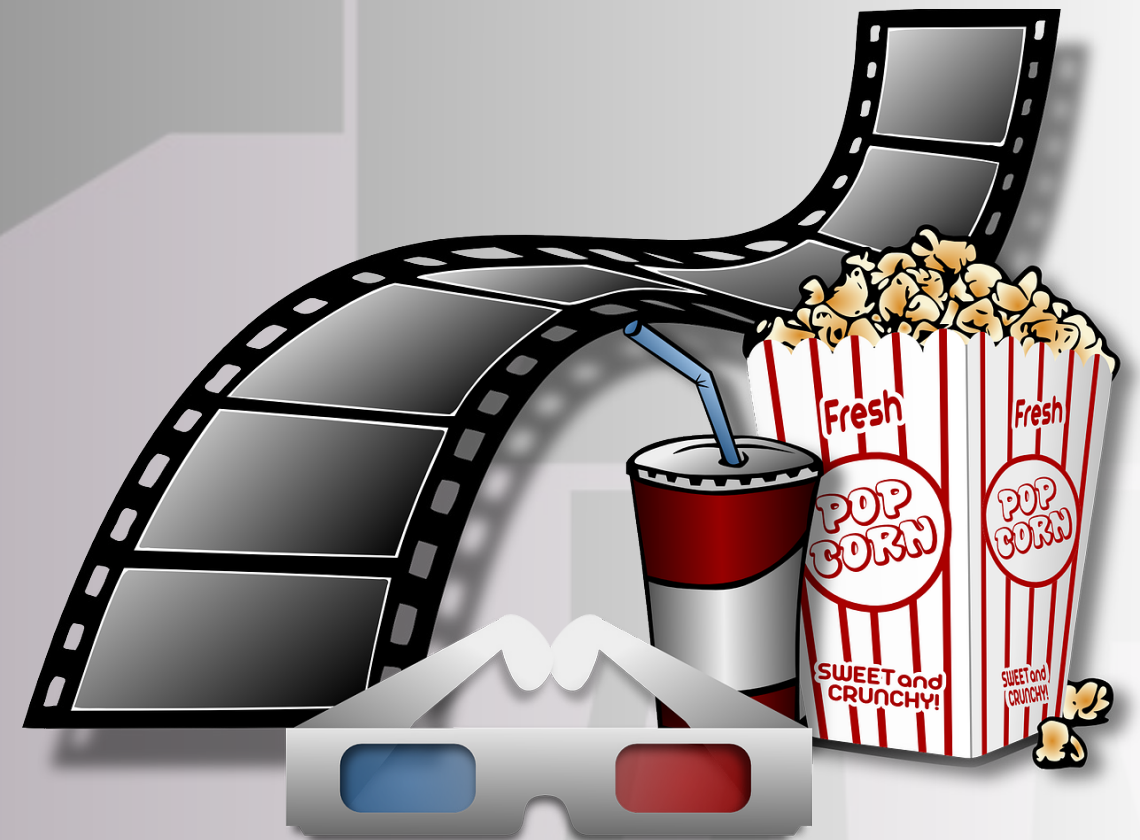
By Wesley Cipolla '21

For the past 90 years, Reading has been the site of major movie productions. In 1928, the city was part of a nationwide contest to find the next The Little Rascal. In 1970, “Rabbit Run,” an adaptation of the classic novel by Shillington native John Updike, was filmed in Berks County. In 2009, M. Night Shyamalan used the Pagoda for a filming location in his disastrous “The Last Airbender.” Thankfully, the scene was deleted. In 2019, Reading-based filmmakers Andrew Pochan and Sue Lange created “Dust Nuggets,” a film set entirely in the Reading area. “Dust Nuggets,” which won the “Made in Reading” award at this year’s Reading Film Festival, was billed as a trippy psychological thriller in the vein of David Lynch. The closest that “Dust Nuggets” comes to David Lynch is that the experience of watching it is similar to the scene in “Blue Velvet” where Dennis Hopper beats the crap out of Kyle MacLachlan. As the crushing blows of disappointment rain down, you can only wonder; why can’t anyone film a decent movie in this city?

The story of “Dust Nuggets” follows an aspiring rock group of the same name that slowly falls into addiction, infighting and despair. The movie’s marketing emphasized surreal imagery and disturbing visuals, something you would expect from the films of David Lynch. Instead, we get zero-dimensional characters, laughable acting and some of the worst dialogue I’ve ever heard in a movie. The closest thing to creativity we get in “Dust Nuggets” comes from scenes where comatose bandleader KK (Linnea Sage) reflects on her life from her hospital bed. There is a hallucination featuring Reading’s own drag queen Aime Vanité, but it’ll just leave you wishing that you were watching “All That Jazz.”

The rest of the movie is just jam sessions and conversations between the band members that lead nowhere. The jokes fall flat and none of the characters are interesting. Did I mention that KK’s band mates are named Olson, Molson and Jolson? That’s a laugh - I thought Jolson was supposed to be the world’s greatest entertainer. The Reading locations are also completely underutilized, and the movie lacks any distinct regional character as a resort. In a region with gorgeous scenery and so many unique locations to choose from, the most we see of Reading is a stop at the Queen City Diner and a scene where the band is being interviewed on BCTV. I must say that the interview of director Andrew Pochan on the real BCTV is much more insightful. In that interview, Pochan disses blockbusters like “Avengers” and agreed that there is more to film than tentpole Hollywood behemoths. He’s right, but you’d think that Pochan would have learned from those other filmmakers about how to make a movie that is creative and engaging. At least “Avengers” knows how to use a green screen properly - there’s a scene in “Dust Nuggets” where you can see the green lines that haven’t been keyed properly.

Such amateurish mistakes would be fine as long as the story, characters and writing were solid. Unfortunately, they’re anything but. During one Dust Nuggets concert, an old man jokes that his new car is a “Rolls Canardly;” it rolls down one hill and can hardly get up the next. This ancient groaner is one of the few memorable lines in the whole movie. The rest of “Dust Nuggets” is pretty forgettable, which honestly suits it well; you’ll be bored and frustrated, but not for long.



Contemporary Weavings by Erika Hewston

By Mia Hernandez '22
Photographs by Dr. John Pankratz



This exhibit was one of the most interesting ones I've seen in the gallery so far. At first, I didn't understand what these weavings meant or what they represented until I read about the artist's thought process in creating these pieces. When creating each piece, she wanted them to be parallels of the different forms of nature such as rugged cliffs, dripping stalactites, flowing waterfalls, gapping canyons, and any other geological landscape. She also wanted to replicate different mediums of art such as ink, paint, and show how they look dripping down a canvas. After I read this and went back to the gallery, it all came together like a puzzle and took my imagination on a tour. It was wonderful seeing all these forms of nature and mediums reflected in the form of weaving. Some looked exactly like dripping paint, and waves while others did as well but with a twist for the imagination.

Easton Nights by Peter Ydeen



By Mia Hernandez '22
Photographs by Dr. John Pankratz

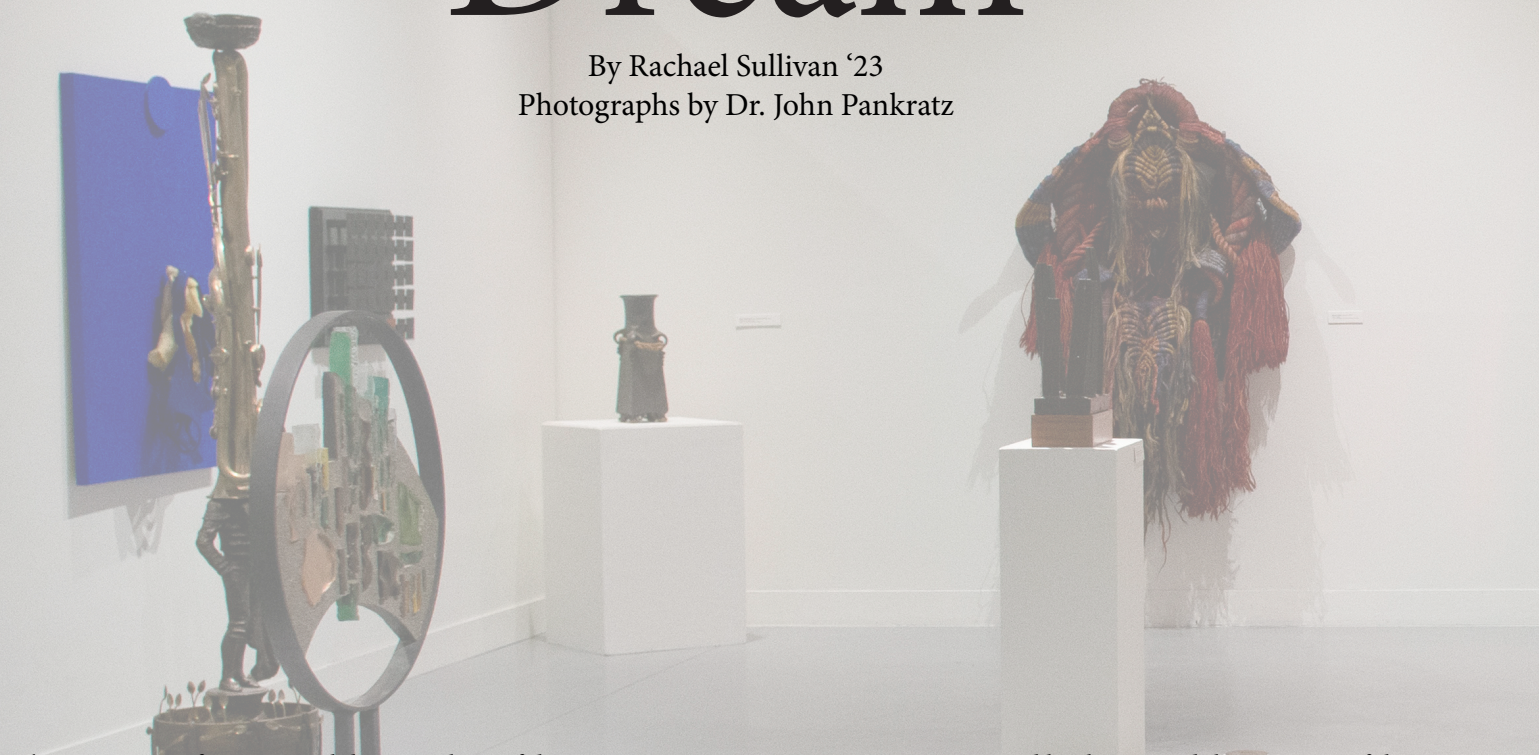
I didn't realize this exhibit was just pictures, I thought that they would be paintings. Having these pictures on display to walk around to view almost felt like I was looking through a photo album or the camera roll on your phone. Many of these pictures were at nighttime and the buildings were empty but filled with different levels of street lighting. While some of these pictures reminded me of a map straight out of Call of Duty: Black Ops, others reminded me of the old houses and buildings here in Reading and back in North East, which is where I am from. The buildings there are lit exactly the same way. It was very nostalgic and gave me flashbacks of driving through the town at 1 in the

morning because sometimes you just feel the need to. This setting with all the artificial lighting shows how, even though the town that has been here before most of us, it has now grown old and possesses a beautiful rustic charm.

I am not the only one who sees these paintings in a different light. When asked what she also thought of the gallery, sophomore Jada Weedon responded that "This gallery piece inspires me to look at the world around me differently. It calls for me to find stories in what others say and look closely at the unusual and unimportant."

Mementos of a Dream

By Rachael Sullivan '23
Photographs by Dr. John Pankratz



The Mementos of a Dream exhibit was a beautiful presentation of different sculptures created by different artists. As the title suggests, each sculpture represents abstract objects that can be interpreted as being from a dream. The abstractedness of each sculpture comes from the artists' interpretation of collections or gatherings of different everyday objects. The objects are all placed together in a nonsensical order and meant to be a contrast or comparison with one another. The collection was curated by an Albright alumna Brie Diodata, who graduated in 2019. The exhibit features different sculpture artists such as Jesse Amado, Robert Blanchards, Buido Brink, Salvador Dali, Ilsa Getz, Dante Giglio, Leonid Linauts, George Papashvily, Leonid Sokov and Jesus Rafael Soto.

This was the first time in a while that I had went into the Freedman Gallery Center since the pandemic began so I was not sure about what to expect. I was very much impressed by the sculptures that I observed! Each of the sculptures were very creative and I loved observing the uses of different objects to create a new sculpture piece.

One of the sculptures I observed was called "Hallucination of the Toreador with Spoons" and this is sculpture created by Salvador Dali. It features a small statue of a man with a trombone, instrument, scissors, what appears to be a basket on top and bronze spoons scattered throughout the sculpture

piece. I was very impressed by the use and the positions of the different objects. It created a sense of chaos, yet synergy. All the objects help to direct the viewers' eyes upwards, and towards the top of the sculpture, the scissors are spread out and this further helps to direct the viewers' attention towards all the tiny spoons protruding out of the sculpture. Additionally, all the objects are a golden bronze whilst the man is a darker bronze color. This helps to bring more attention towards the objects, which is the point of the entire exhibit.

Another sculpture I observed in this exhibit was called "Homenaje al Humano from An American portrait" by Jesus Rafael Soto and this is a board of 35 wooden squares, all of them except one are black. The one exception is a wooden block on the last horizontal row and the fifth column, which is an orange-red color. The title itself translates literally to "Tribute to the Human," and observing this sculpture and thinking about the title made me think about humanity and how we have a tendency to try to fit in with others, hence all the black wooden squares. The one orange-red square represents how since we are so afraid to deviate from the norm, there is only a few people brave enough to do so.

Overall, I was very impressed with the whole exhibit and I hope so see more exhibits featuring these artists. The curator organized it very well and I hope she will continue to organize exhibits and art shows in the future.

By the Numbers

By Rachael Sullivan '23
Photographs by Dr. John Pankratz

The same day I had seen the exhibition, Mementos of a Dream, I also saw By the Numbers, which was another exhibition right in the next room of the gallery. This exhibition featured a portfolio lent by Kristen Woodward, a professor at Albright College of painting and other art-related subjects. Like the Mementos of a Dream, this exhibition featured the work of various artist, these artists being faculty members who were fixated on numbers one summer in 2007. According to a description of the exhibition from Kristen Woodward, these faculty members were so fixated on numbers because they had the task of scoring AP art high school students' scores. Before scoring, all the faculty members had to be aware of the scoring system. Woodward even mentioned that this staff was so focused on numbers that the thought of numbers crept in during their other daily tasks, such as eating meals. The portfolio features different printmaking pieces organized by Dale Clifford, the AP Studio Art Readers and the faculty of Savannah College of Art and Design.

Each of the art pieces represents how the participants interpreted numbers during the summer of 2007 when it was on their minds constantly. Furthermore, each of the artworks were very different in usage of color, images, and medium. For example, some of these art pieces used photographs, whilst others used etching, serigraphs, and other more digital mediums. Not all these art pieces had numbers featured either. There were forms of numbers or ideas associated with numbers, such as counting or mathematics and this was represented in many ways.

One good example of this is "Three trees and other such" by Alison Denyer, which is a digital print featuring a photograph or maybe a series of photographs layered together made to feature

three trees. The use of line, color and shadow is brilliant in this piece. The tree branches create very interesting forms of line and help to direct the viewers' eyes towards different areas of the print, specifically the areas that featured more contrasting colors. This piece features the concept of numbers because the title specifically says, "three trees." When looking at this piece and understanding the context of this exhibit, I thought about how thinking about numbers so much could make someone feel compelled to count the number of random things, such as the bricks on a wall or in this example, the trees outside one's window.

Another piece that used the concept of numbers in a unique way was a piece called "6 divided by 5" by Ken Daley. This piece is a serigraph that features five different words, each of them with "S" at the beginning and "X" at the end. The middle letters are each of the five vowels and the piece itself reads from top to bottom "Sax, Sex, Six, Sox, Sux." I liked how the title and the actual piece interconnect with one another in a rather unique way. The title is "6 divided by 5" and there are five words in this piece. The middle one being "six." In a way, the artist "divided" six by five by taking the actual word "six" and then proceeding change the vowel four more times. Ergo, one would then get five of different versions of the word "six."

As a small aspiring artist, myself, I appreciate the involvement of artists who are also teachers and professors and the unique theme behind this portfolio. Both the exhibits, Mementos of a Dream and By the Numbers were very well done. Even though both exhibitions are over, I do encourage students, even if you are not an art student, to explore the exhibitions featured at the Gallery whenever you can!



Alison Denyer, Three Trees and Other Such, 2007
Digital print



Ken Daley, 6 - 5, 2005-2007
Serigraph



2020 and the Art of Social Justice

By Dallas Roberson '22

It is safe to say that 2020 has not been anybody's year. In a time of a global pandemic people in the United States have found themselves in the midst of having to defend and speak out once again on reoccurring social justice issues. What sparked the rise of both physical and artistic activism was the murder on May 25 of George Floyd by the Minneapolis police. This tragic event sparked outrage all across the country with the subject revolving around justice for George Floyd as well as many other victims of police brutality. Both streets and media platforms were flooded with images of activism and protests. Hashtags like #nojusticenopeace #justiceforgeorge #blacklivesmatter #saytheirnames grew in popularity and usage over social media. Groups from all around the country and even the world united to protest the unlawful and downright unjustifiable murders of George Floyd, Elijah McClain, Breonna Taylor, and many more. One of the results from these protests was the creation of everything from murals to exhibits to the production of music is being made in honor of these issues.

In a year filled with events like the coronavirus, wildfires, murder hornets, hurricanes and more, this was the icing on many peoples 2020 disaster cake. In cities and in less populated areas artist took to both canvas and walls to display their anger and pain with the problem at hand. Some artists chose to not tag their pieces while others put their social media handles on their works. Artists like Lola Lovenotes are one of these artists who made her work be known. She plastered her beautiful piece on a boarded-up window like many other artists. For Lola Lovenotes she chose to commemorate Breonna Taylor and shared the need for justice (image above). A big issue that has been a focal point of 2020 activism is the need to protect black women and girls. Many murals have been painted both in honor of those lost, as well as demanding a call to change.



2020 also brought to the table the issue of LGBTQ+ activism as well. Sadly, in 2020 the United States has seen the murder of 34 transgender people. Statistically transwomen of color are the most harmed group in the trans community. With both LGBTQ+ and BLM activists speaking and acting out on social justice issues, a conversation surrounding the inclusivity of both groups of each other began. Issues like the subtle racism within the LGBTQ+ community and whether or not Black Lives Matter truly spoke for all black lives became a social media topic of discussion. Then joint activist expressed the need to protect both communities and represent them together. Artist @hektad. official expressed this convergence of social justice issues by painting a straightforward mural up on wood palette covered doors (image on the right). In 2020, we have seen the uniting of social justice groups and the art communities who both figuratively and literally painted their messages across the country.



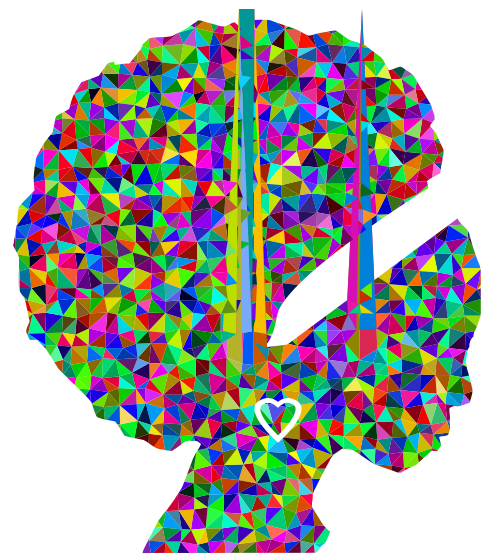
These artists and their beautiful heart wrenching pieces showed up all over the states with messages of both love and peace as well as resistance. Artists have not only made beautiful paintings and murals, but there is a bunch of beautiful writings from them as well. A piece from 2016 has resurfaced in light of 2020s BLM movement. The piece titled What is the Price of Our Lives expresses the hurt and pain of black people in America who live in a system of oppression was shared on @7soulsdeep on Instagram. The piece was also painted as well. Big musical artist like Lil Baby whose song "The Bigger Picture" depicts the police brutality and discrimination in America, or The Killers who wrote "Land of the Free" which details white privilege and police

brutality, many big artists have taken to music to express the issues at hand.

In a year as messy and rough as 2020 the last thing communities needed was having to defend their lives and rights. Covid-19 complicated how our daily lives were gone about and even changed how protests looked with masks seen left and right and conversations of staying safe while in a pandemic. Social justice and art have always gone hand in hand as art has been the voice of oppressed people for years and years. Art is both the voice and the image of all kinds of communities and people across the world. In times of turbulence and unrest creativity flows with a different kind of passion that speaks for all.

Being Me

By Raemani McKay '21



Being biracial wasn't easy growing up. I always felt like I had to be in a certain group or hang out with certain people. Being Black and Puerto Rican, with brown skin and unruly, nappy hair, almost does put you in a group - A group that not everybody understands. I didn't know whether it was something to be proud of or something I hated. I spent most of my childhood with the Puerto Rican side of my family eating *Arroz con habichuelas* every day. The black side of my family wasn't in my life as much as I wanted them to be. That just made me another statistic. As a black child who does not have their father present in their life, I was part of the 54 percent.

Growing up, I hated being black. I noticed this in middle school, even when I went around my mother's friends. Something about the way people looked at me and the nasty comments they made about the color of my skin didn't sit well with me; it actually made me disgusted with who I was and how I looked. So disgusted that whenever someone asked me what my whole name was I would say Raemani Marie Rodriguez. But really my last name is McKay. When I told people that last name, they would assume that I was fully Hispanic with dark skin. Then, they would talk to me in Spanish. I understood Spanish just as well as any other "real" Hispanic would. When it came down to speaking it, I just could not. Spanish was the missing key to what I really wanted to be: fully Puerto Rican.

I remember a time when I told my mother that I hated being half-black. I wanted to look just like her and my grandma, with long blonde hair, white skin, and colored eyes. When I told my mother I hated looking like a black person, it immediately brought tears to her eyes. I honestly don't know why my mom was so upset, she tried to convince me that I should appreciate my perfect thick medium-length hair, my sun-kissed skin, and

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my beautiful dark brown eyes. But how could I if that's not how I wanted to be seen?

Other. Other is the word that describes me. When I think of that word, I think of all the times where I am filling a form out and they ask me to put my race. I put other because Black and Puerto Rican is never an option. That made me think that Black and Puerto Rican would never be an option to me. Still to this day, I begin to wonder what it would be like if I had all the Puerto Rican features that I wanted. Not a moment too soon, I remember my brown skin, my unruly hair, and deep chocolate eyes are here to stay with me forever, and I just have to love the skin that I am in.

So, I excelled in all my studies; even though it was hard dealing with this thing we call life. I helped out at home and tried to be the best I was at school. But I needed something else to do. I took up band classes, and I learned how to play the clarinet. I started band class when I was in the fourth grade, and I absolutely loved it. When I got to high school I figured out that I did not want to partake in that anymore. That's when photography, reading, writing, and all the other great things missing from my life stepped in. Photography filled the void, readings exploited me, and writings spoke for me. I was no longer worried about my race and how people perceived me. I just wanted the best for myself, with those things in my life I finally found the actual missing key.

As I look back to my younger self, I realize that the hate and the negativity will never stop. This moment made me grow, I also realized that at this moment I found myself. I knew who I was. I was Raemani Marie McKay, and I shouldn't care about how people thought of me. Anyone who is going through the same shouldn't care, they should be happy with themselves like I'm happy with myself now.

Art in COVID: Dr. Hamwi's Global Watercolor Course

By Rachael Sullivan '23

Last semester I had the opportunity to be enrolled in a global connections course that focused on the uses and techniques of watercolor. Dr. Hamwi is a versatile artist himself with a history of a range of medium and techniques. During one of the classes, he has said that he's been doing watercolor for about twenty years. In this course, he focuses on teaching students the four basic watercolor techniques he has learned from his experiences: mixing colors on palette, glazing, wet-on-wet and pointillism. Each week, he goes over each technique and requires the students to read a chapter from the class's textbook titled "The Watercolor Course You've Always Wanted" by Leslie Frontz, who is an experienced watercolorist.

The most astonishing aspect of this class is that it is an entirely online course, which at first, can seem impossible. However, we have been able to prosper and grow very well with Dr. Hamwi's help and insistence to make the online class as close to an in-person class as possible. All students are required to have their camera on, as Dr. Hamwi wishes very much to interact and see each of the students and their artwork. Usually, when he

calls each students' names, they are to hold up their artwork to the camera and describe the work. He also always takes the time to look at the homework submissions at the beginning of class and describing what he appreciates, notices and suggestions for improvement. More recently, he also began to incorporate other students' opinions and thoughts about someone's submission. He emphasized that it is important to hear from multiple peers about one's artwork.

Overall, I think this was a very fun class that was well-transitioned for a class that was meant to be in-person before the COVID-19 outbreak. Dr. Hamwi's efforts to make this a class that is as less stressful, a good learning environment and as close to an in-person class as possible makes this class very enjoyable. I consider myself very lucky to have been able to take this course, as it was only offered this semester and last semester. If you're an art student or you need art credits, I highly recommend taking any one of Hamwi's classes. Despite the time we are in and our shift to online courses, the professor truly does well at making the class as fun and engaging.



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Alumni Spotlight Autumn Spears: An Artist Through and Through

By Rachael Sullivan '23 and Mia Hernandez '22
Photographs by Deborah Afolabi '21



As president of the Albright Visual Arts Organization (AVAO), an aspiring artist and mentor, involved member of the Albright Arts Magazine (AM) and a well-known promoter of the arts and on-campus art-related events, Autumn Spears '20 was one of the most influential students in the Albright community. An awardee of the Gold "A" Award, an award presented to seniors who show outstanding leadership in the arts communities, Autumn contributed her time and efforts to many on-campus activities and has won many awards for those contributions. She was a panelist in the June 2020 Racial Healing and Reconciliation panel, and one of her artworks, "Ghosts of Black Girl's Present," was awarded the President's Award at the 2020 Annual Juried Art Show. Spears was also the fashion student representative as a fashion showcase graphic identity designer at the Fashion Showcase in May 2017 and was a writer for the campus fashion magazine, Fashion Lion.

Spears has not only made such wonderful contributions to the campus and within school-life, but outside academics and clubs as well. She is well-known amongst the entire college community. Freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors alike have all had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Spears, especially those involved with arts organizations. She has been a mentor to many aspiring student artists, helping them to learn techniques through AVAO, AGON, AM and more, as well as being encouraging and supportive.

Spears's artwork is exceptional as well. It employs the use of many techniques and mediums, and attempts to raise awareness about certain issues, such as race and gender, in her art. For example, her painting, "Ghosts of Black Girl's Past," which is a diptych of "Ghosts of Black Girl's Present," depicts the social standard of straight hair over natural hair and how that standard limited many black girls from exploring their hair. Due to Spears's artwork being very versatile in terms of medium, subject matter and topic, we decided to interview Spears specifically about her art and how she grew as an artist and a person.

What are Autumn's main mediums when it comes to art?

My two main mediums are acrylic paint and digital art. I go through periods where I'm using both or I may be using one more than the other. But recently last year I started working in oil, and it is amazing! I want to find ways that I can still use it safely when I return home.

How do you maintain that balance of style? (realistic painting vs. digital illustrations)

It's funny that you ask this question, because even though I've been creating art my entire life I'm still trying to figure out "my style." Even in my four years of attending Albright I've seen it change so much. Specifically, as it relates to artworks that I create in traditional mediums, I use realism as a vehicle to accentuate my concept. Whereas in most of my digital artworks they are purely meant to be stylized and aesthetically pleasing. I use different media for different purposes, but sometimes those connections are interchangeable. But generally, I would say that my style is both very concrete and fluid. While my artworks done in different media may share some similarities, my style often changes when I change media. But getting back to your idea of balance, I like to get into the habit rotating between different mediums. Meaning that I could be working on two artworks done in different mediums at the same time, or after spending time working in one medium, I'll switch to another. My philosophy that I follow as an artist is to never get too comfortable, because that's when you'll begin to pigeonhole yourself.

What were some of the challenges when learning how to do digital art? And transitioning from traditional art to digital art?

My first experience working digitally was with Photoshop during the end of my freshmen year. As some of you may know Photoshop is so overwhelming. There are a million and one different features, and you can do so much with it. That was scary to me. And quite frankly very intimidating. Throughout the entire class I had no clue what I was doing, but whenever my professor told me to click a button, I'd do it and somehow things would appear. As you can probably tell I'm not a tech savvy button clicking type of girl so I definitely felt more comfortable with digital art when I was gifted a tablet for Christmas a few years ago and could actually draw on the screen. It definitely bridged that gap of digital art and the physicality of traditional art forms.

Aside from learning how to use digital art platforms (I use a free one called IbisPaintX) one of my biggest challenges was and still is trying to find my style. Majority of the artists that I follow on social media are all digital artists who've been working digitally for a long time, and use a lot of line work in their art. But coming from a traditional art background specifically working with realism, where you rely heavily on value and texture, I did not use line as a prominent part of my artworks. I found it very challenging at the beginning to incorporate that aspect of realism into my artworks because of the technology itself, and not knowing how to manipulate it to do what I wanted it to do.

What would you say to new artists who are just starting out?

To new artists who are just starting out I would say "do not copy or compare yourself to your favorite artist." I follow some of my favorite artists on social media and especially when I started working digitally, I was obsessing over how I could get to where they were, specifically in their following and their style. I don't think that there is anything wrong with having artists that you like or who influence you, but your goal is not to imitate them. From my own experience it really stunted my growth and took a toll on how I felt about my art. Believing that because my art didn't look

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like theirs, I wasn't good enough. So, I would definitely encourage new artists to protect themselves from comparison and self-criticism by just continuing to create and allowing for growth and personal development. Other general advice I would give to new artists or veteran artists is to never get comfortable. Once you've gotten comfortable with a certain medium or a specific subject matter then it is time to move on. You can always come back to those things but you don't want to be stunting your own growth by limiting yourself.

Would you say that one of the reasons you create art is to spread awareness about different issues?

I would absolutely say that one of the reasons I create art is to spread awareness about different social issues. Considering that I'm from DC which is a super liberal place, and I attended a very diverse and super liberal high school awareness has been ingrained into my social fabric. When I was in high school, I was a part of the human rights club and even started a magazine devoted to discussing social issues through the arts. In the more recent years, I can say that I am very glad that social issues have made their way into mainstream culture and everyday conversations. And specifically, as it relates to my artwork, I use my art as a vehicle to explain and portray the gravity of the issue at hand. Portraying things in a way that would really allow people to reflect on the issue and even their voluntary or involuntary involvement in it. In my artworks that relate to different issues I really like to reel in the viewer by using juxtaposition to really force that idea of awareness.

How has your art and passions changed since you were last interviewed?

So much has changed since my last interview. During my last interview I was 18 years old going on 19 and I was nearing the end of my freshmen year at Albright. During that season of my career as an artist I was enamored by the growth that I'd experience just through my first few art classes at Albright and being able to take what I'd learned from those classes and continue making art on my own without prompts. Even though I thought I was a decent artist in high school I was just amazed by what my professors and their classes brought out of me. I had this constant feeling of "wow I can actually do that?" And that was just the beginning. These last three years have really been a season of grooming and exploring, by refining the skill sets I have but also adding to them and often combining them to produce something new. I have been truly blessed by the friendships and the mentorship that I have experienced from a lot of the arts faculty at Albright. They have encouraged, challenged, and supported me in finding my own path as artist and truly developing my own voice and being able to communicate that. Regardless of how far I go with the arts I will always be a student and I will be forever grateful for the friends, teachers, and mentors I've encountered on my journey. Since my last interview I would say that my passion for creating art has grown immensely. While some of my themes and influences have remained constant since I started college, I don't have a set path or set subject that I envision myself sticking to. Instead, one of my goals for right now and what I would like to do in the future is really allowing my art to engage whether that is through emotion, topics, culture, etc. In a time in the world that is so divisive I really want my art to connect people.

Spears's art truly does connect people, as not only does it explore many topics and mediums, but it also represents the growth and development of an artist. She will go far with her art, and will inspire many other people, students and colleagues alike with her personality and art skills.

Autumn Spears '20

Albright Arts Magazine (AM) | 21



Hats Off to the Classes of 2020 & 2021!

**The AM staff would like to give a warm
congratulations to Albright's seniors!
Check out some of their accomplishments in the
arts in our [Senior Feature Tradesize!](#)**

Arts Organizations and COVID: Domino Players

By Jada Weedon '23



When the Great White Way closes down due to COVID-19, what is a liberal arts school's resident theatre company left to do? Well, the answer to that question is to adapt and venture into the world of Zoom. Albright's Domino Players adhered to the challenge that was presented to them when Covid took away all chances of in person performances. Despite the delay the group was able to pull together two broadcasted productions.

When Covid-19 hit Albright this past Spring, production in the theater department halted like a slow-motion movie scene. The show, "Scene Changes," consisted of "two monologues, a spoken word-stand-up comedy mashup, a revisioning of Shakespeare's "To Be or Not to Be," a Lovecraftian horror play, a traditional ten-minute play and a brand-new musical," as said by the director, Matt Fotis. The Domino Players persevered and pulled together the Zoom reading/performance five months later in the beginning of the semester.

Following the "Scene Changes" performance, the

Domino Players were then tasked with crafting a sketch comedy show that highlighted the deeply pragmatic reality of the country's election while still being limited to the Zoom format. From October 30 through November 2, the Players put on "Cmon America, or, Hindsight is 20/20" a virtual sketch show that utilized the Zoom aspect of the coronavirus era to their advantage. They created a time piece that spoke of the reality of these trying times. The show left watchers with the overall message that "It took more than one of us to get in this mess and it's going to take more than one to get us out."

The Domino Players have two more productions within their 2020-2021 season. In February the Players will be putting on "The Importance of Being Earnest" by Oscar Wilde, directed by Jeff Lentz. Then in April, the Players will finish out their season with William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," which is being directed by Dahlia Al-Habieli. Although COVID-19 has placed a great obstacle within the path of the Domino Players, they continue to face and tackle that battle with a fresh set of creativity and ingenuity.

Arts Organizations and COVID: Albright Visual Arts Organization (AVAO)

By Thania Inoa De Jesus '21

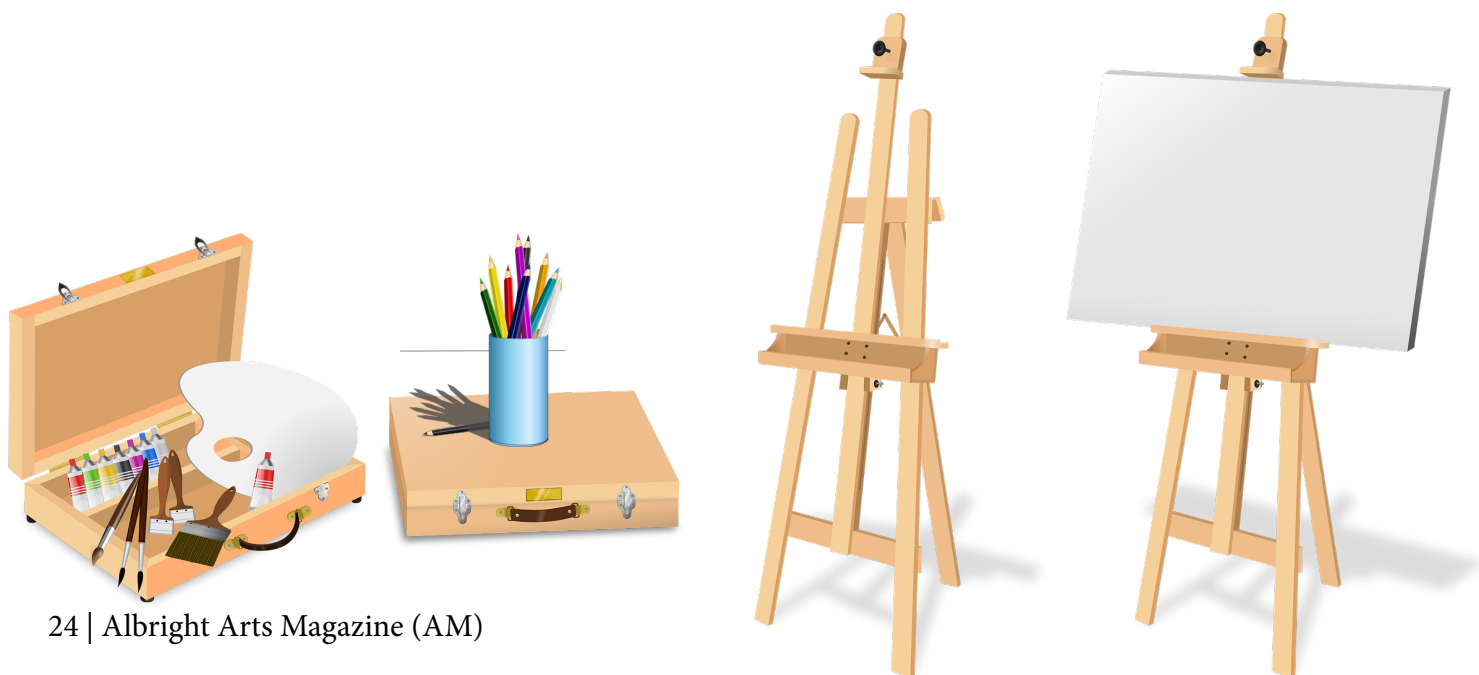
During the Fall 2020 semester, the executive board of the Albright Visual Arts Organization (AVAO) have been working towards future programs for current members. The president, Dallas Roberson, has been keeping students up to date with any gallery shows, or arts events going on campus. However, things have been more difficult than they seem.

"I do not feel like I can effectively do my job from home," she said. For her things have been more challenging as she is currently out of campus and is staying home for the fall semester.

COVID-19 has made things very difficult for the organization. AVAO is a hands-on organization, which makes it difficult for them to follow through with their programs, which they cannot do due to social distancing. While the officials are not happy with the situation, they have made sure to work

towards a more organized next semester. AVAO was able to have an event alongside the Hispanic Culture Club where participants were able to paint and share their experiences as Latinos/Hispanics with one another. "The event was a great success," says Thania Inoa De Jesus, the organization's vice president.

Currently the executive board members are looking for ways to continue to provide a space to create art in a safe manner, be more inclusive in the work that they do and to navigate doing the physical things with restrictions. They are all working hard to ensure that in the future everything is set and ready to go. In addition, to prepare for future fundraising, the executive board members have been working on future designs for stickers, so be on the lookout for those!



Arts Organizations and COVID: Students of Caribbean-African Association (SOCAA)

By Deborah Afolabi '21

The pandemic has caused a lot of issues and needed adjustments for organizations on campus. The need for social distancing and the shift to online has disrupted many programs and leadership of organizations on campus have had to rethink how they run their clubs. This shift has especially been difficult for arts-based organizations who rely on the hands-on experience their clubs require.

The Students of Caribbean-African Association is one such organization that has been impacted by COVID-19. In addition to regular meetings and events, the club also has a dance team, and all of these aspects have had to be rethought to fit with social distancing guidelines. The new president of the organization was willing to answer some questions regarding how the organization is doing this semester.

Is SOCAA still active this semester?

Yes, SOCAA is active this semester, at least we tried our best to be.

If so, in what capacity? Are you doing more or less of what you'd originally do?

We attempted to have online club meetings and we were approved for one event; however, it was canceled due to the recent increase of cases on campus. This would've been our only event this semester because the process for in-person events is so extensive and dumb.

What events has SOCAA been able to do/been part of this semester?

Part of the SOCAA dance team was able to participate in AAS's fashion show.

How has COVID and the new restrictions affected the organization?

No one likes Zoom and finding a time when people would participate in the club meetings is annoying. Additionally, student Zoom accounts only allow for 40-minute meetings

and our meetings usually run longer. It would be great if club presidents, at least, could be provided with unlimited meetings like the professors. Secondly, the process for applying for in-person events is extensive, especially when the advisor or another staff member must be present. I feel like clubs are not taken as seriously, especially when compared to Greek life and clubs run by professors/adults on campus. Katy Mangold has been a huge help and the college is trying to move in a way that supports African American clubs on campus but honestly, SOCAA has always been overlooked.

What do you wish could be done differently/better to help your organization flourish in the future?

I started to touch on this earlier, but I feel like the college as a whole needs to have a lesson on black and Caribbean cultures in general since I feel like that is a big reason why our events get denied or shut down. I think there should be more black leaders on campus and in administration, and for Albright to actually listen to its students. The college would be better if the leaders were more open to the possibility of being able to learn something from its students.

Dr. Heidi Mau: Forever Curious

By Carla Thomas '22

Photograph by Deborah Afolabi '21



Professor Heidi Mau, PhD, who is a digital communications and communications professor at Albright College, is always curious. This is something that is shown through her constant research and questioning of the world around her. She says that she is always looking for “communication phenomena”, which is what fuels her research and motivates her to continue with her work. Dr. Mau has been researching the interworkings of fandoms for the past four years now.

Growing up, Mau says that she has always been very curious about the world around her and how it worked. In order to follow this curiosity, Mau decided to go to college, something that her parents did not do. “I was a first-generation college student, so college was something that my parents always wanted for me.” This is something that motivated her to work her way through college at William James College, which is now a part of Grand Valley University in Michigan. While in college, she moved between many different programs before settling on a program that combined communications and fine arts. The facilities at William James were what “attracted” her to media in the first place. The friends that Mau met while in college were also motivators when it came to following her passion for media, “we would create little projects together”. These little projects are what created and kept the interest that Mau had for communications and media.

“What I’ve learned is that a lot of people are really willing to give time and mentor”. The mentors that Mau had in college seem to have influenced her so much that she even became a professor herself. “Maybe that’s why I’m sitting here across from you today,” she says laughing. One professor, Deanna Morse, Mau still keeps in contact with. This a connection that Mau has kept for many years and is a person that has been a lifelong mentor.

Mau has been teaching communications for a long time but has not always been teaching here at Albright. She started out teaching at a public access tv station, where she taught people how to work in video production. Wanting to continue learning about the arts, Mau went back to school to get her Masters of Fine Arts in Film and Media Arts at Temple University. Mau taught at many universities, including University of Oklahoma, Penn State and Temple, but she always wanted to teach at a liberal arts school. “There are so many people coming to the table and they can add a lot to the conversation,” says Mau, “but at a bigger school it is hard to hear all the viewpoints.” These different viewpoints are what keep Mau inspired about her field and in order to hear these different viewpoints, she decided to start teaching at a smaller school. The small school that she decided to work at was Albright College in Reading PA, the same school that she teaches at to this day.

For the past couple of years, Mau has been working on a long-term research project where she looks into the interworkings of fandom culture. This research has taken her to many different fan conventions, most recently she went to New York Comic Con. Before diving deeper into the research behind fandoms, it is important to define what a fandom actually is. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the definition of fandom “is a group of fans of someone or something, especially very enthusiastic ones.” This definition is very important to understand before going further into Mau’s research.

The reason behind the start of this research is more

simple than one would think. One summer, Mau was watching television and she realized that during the shows airing there were people who were live-tweeting. Live-tweeting is a new media form of interacting between fans that occurs while a new episode of a television show is airing. Usually, the fans of a specific show will be tweeting their reactions to what is happening in the new episode while it is airing on TV. Mau says that this interesting and new form of fan interaction made popular and common through the creation of platforms like Twitter. Mau wanted to try out live tweeting by using an application called TweetDeck. This application allows the user to easily live tweet since the twitter feed is refreshing faster.

For her research, Mau is looking at a specific fandom called Earpers, who are all fans of the television show Wynonna Earp. She describes that she “fell into” this fan culture and says that it “turned out to be pretty unique.” People are starting to write about this fandom because of the things that it does for the community. A lot of people within the fandom do social work and try to help the communities that they live in. Unlike many fandoms that can tend to be toxic, Earpers try to leave a positive impact on the world around them.

Mau wanted to know what would happen if she became part of this fandom. What role would she take in the fandom? How are roles decided? These are all questions that Mau was wondering about when she started her research. Not all of these questions have been answered, and there is still more research to be done. Mau says that she is not done with her research yet. She is still working on it as “there is still so much left to learn about.”



Wynonna Earp-inspired illustrations. Top: Illustrations for alt Wynonna Earp comic book covers by illustrator Lora Innis. Bottom: Wynonna Earp fan art by illustrator Krystal Beisick

Professor Joseph Hocker

By Derek Estrada '23

Joseph Hocker, one of the best professors I've personally had here, is the next topic of discussion. He has a background in photography and went to the Tyler School of Art for graduate school and UArts for his undergrad. He has been making lens based and light based photography for almost two decades. Professor Hocker grew up in and around Philly however lives in Phoenixville now. He teaches photo 1 and 2, computer graphics, Video 1 and 2 as well as senior seminars and has co-taught history and photography with professor archie. Professor Hocker started photography because of early high school. One of the most memorable experiences was when he was at a wedding and the wedding photographer was late so he shot for the wedding. He was also into photographing friends skateboarding and would often go camping a lot as a kid which provided opportunities to photograph nature. He never gets to enjoy photography as much as he wants to, tries to make photographs as regularly as possible while also being involved with sculpting, videography, and general media. He told me he essentially just loves physically creating things as well. Professor Hocker also has his own specific class that he loves because it explores more of the alternative process aka working with homemade cameras and light based making. Essentially the class uses light to record information for photography at large. It also includes digital cameras, printmaking, and platinum printing.

Getting into the professor's time at Albright he shared how long he been here, his best experience with a student, and overall the school and art. Professor Hocker has worked at Albright for two years and says Albright offers a lot of creative latitude to students and professors that don't tie them down to specifics. Professor Hocker went to a school that was more broad unlike a degree in fine art where that is specific. He said it offers more freedom with their majors, the ability to try a bunch of stuff along with a ton of good equipment. In high school had really great art teachers that inspired him to become a professor of art, however he only wanted to teach in college. Professor Hocker was stressing to me how images are such a big part of our world and it's how we operate our daily lives. Having the tools to make our visual encounters better is something he believes everyone should have. As for his best experience with a student he said it

was in one of his senior seminars. The student was able to pull in concepts and ideas in ways that he wasn't able to tie down to an exact type. "There was a level of completion that isn't often seen in student work." He said the project had complex ideas, explored little bits of everything, it was a painting illustration, fine art, layering collaging and montaging of information that was effective. If you've ever had one of professor Hocker's classes you know that his saying is to "go and create" and it sounds like that student hit it right on the nail. As for the advice he left me with along with others reading this it's something that can be put into many different aspects of life. "Make art, be amazing, and do all those things. Having a platform and space to just create and not have to hit standards is an important part of making." He was saying we should take as much of an opportunity to just make stuff and try to hold each other accountable in making anything. Use your friends to stay motivated on what you're making and building that network now is the most important thing to do.



Photograph by Albright College



SOBA Royalty

By Deborah Afolabi '21

During Black History Month, the Society of Black Alumni (SOBA), in partnership with the Council for an Inclusive, Thriving, and Equitable Community (CITE-C), hosted a virtual talent show where contestants could submit a 90 second or less video that reflected the black experience, history, culture, and excellence. Once all submissions were in, the Albright community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni voted on who they thought should be the winner! The month ended with a networking event with the Society of Black Alumni where students and alumni could connect and witness the unveiling of their 2021 SOBA King, Queen, or Royalty! Without further ado....

Meet your 2021 SOBA Queen, Kelly-Anne Wilson '24



Kelly-Anne is an Arts Administration and Business co-major on a Pre-Law track, while working for the Fund for Albright. She is an active member of several student organizations – Student Government Association (SGA), African American Society (AAS), Albright Arts Magazine (AM), and Albright Visual Arts Organization (AVAO) – as well as serves on the Executive Board of one of Albright's newest working organizations, the Black Women Leadership Association (BWLA), as their social media chair.

On her piece, “Black Child,” Kelly-Anne says, “The audio in this video is from the poem “Hey Black Child” by Useni Eugene Perkins, Bryan Collier and read by P. R. Jackson. This inspired the name of my submission as well.

Graffiti has been around since prehistoric times and is used to express direct and indirect thoughts, images, and emotions. Growing up in predominately African American neighborhoods, it's common to see graffiti on everything from streets signs, to sidewalks, and buildings alike.

My lively city was tagged with murals and markings to serve as a reminder of the people's existence here on Earth, at all times and places. In a way, this video is my own personal graffiti painted onto the canvas of Albright's diverse history. My graffiti is to encourage black men and women here to live on despite life's hardships and keep pressing on. I know that together we can accomplish anything that we are disciplined enough to do.

Today, we face a pandemic that will go down in history

and marches for racial equality and justice across the world. But we also lived through some amazing things as well, like seeing America's first black President and Vice President! We got to witness so much firsthand, so imagine how heavy the textbooks for our lifetime could be. We take on the responsibility to share this history down through the next generations to inspire and encourage the youth.”

Remember,

Black
From the skin, to hair,
to the way we dress,
to our art,
and even the way we speak
is all beautiful.
Black. Is. Beautiful!
You. Are. Beautiful!

We would also like to shoutout our runner-up's, Gabriella Rene '23 and Trinity Peters '22!



Gabriella is a double major in Political Science and History with a minor in Legal Studies, working for the Fund for Albright and as a student Ambassador. She competes on Albright's Womens Track and Field team, is a CITE-C Student Representative, serves as the Triangle Correspondent and Historian of Albright's Sigma Kappa chapter, and is also serving on the Executive Board of BWLA as the SOBA Liaison.

Her piece was “Unbox the Black Woman,” to which she said, “To me Rico Nasty just shows how a Black Woman can be more than one thing. She makes me feel seen and heard. She reminds me that I don't have to fit into the box that society has set for me and I can express myself however I want to, this is my life, and I should love it how I want to without fear.”



Trinity is a Fashion Design and Merchandising major, also working for the Fund for Albright. She is the president of the Students of Caribbean-African Association (SOCAA) and she too serves on the Executive Board of BWLA as the Recruitment Chair.

She wanted to shed some insight on her submission, “to the dreamers,” which she wrote three years ago, but is sad that it is still relevant today: “I wanted to submit my poem about Black dreams in response to the prompt about excellence because I thought that there are many accomplishments many black people have made and continue to make – such as Beyonce having the most Grammy's as a female artist – but there are some dreams that cannot be realized because they die with those whose lives have been taken too early. It's also harder for black people to go about their dreams because of the systematic barriers that are against them, myself included. I wanted to write a poem to bring awareness to the dying of black people and their dreams, especially black women.”

You can watch all of the 2021 submissions on the [Society of Black Alumni page](#) on the Albright College website! Stay tuned for next year's competition!



The pandemic made it difficult for people to meet in person. As such, it was difficult for the AM photographers to take photos for this issue's articles. This is why a lot of articles have illustrative pieces instead of photos. Still, art is happening no matter the circumstance, and the AM photographers continued to work with their craft despite the difficulty. We wanted to give them a spotlight and recognize how they continued to Wake Up the Arts during quarantine. Their work is featured in the following pages.

~Deborah Afolabi '21, Editor-in-Chief

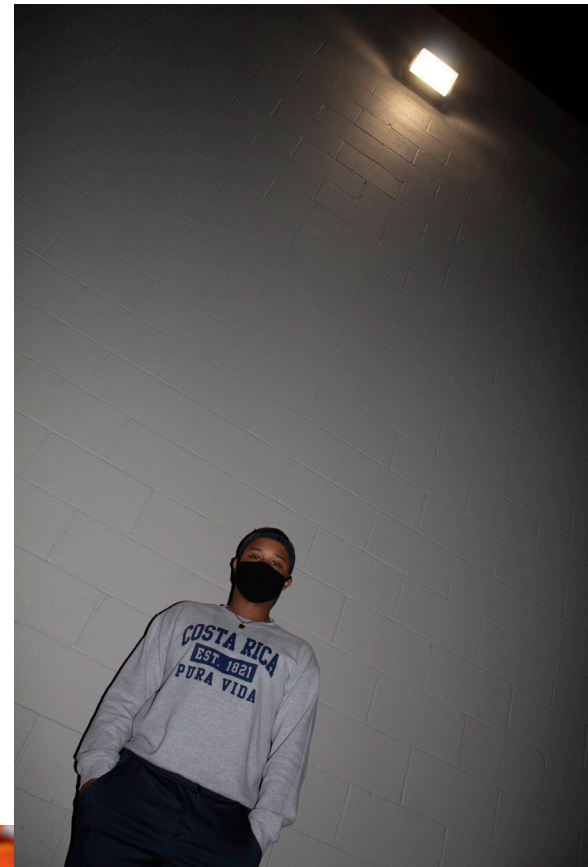
AM Photographers Gallery

Heidi Hernandez '22
Giselle Walter '23
Olivia Hauser '22
Jonathan Leger '23



Heidi Hernandez '22

I usually take close-up photos in the daytime. My favorite one was the flower because it was very vibrant and I just love fell in love with it. In the photo you can really see the details of the flower and I love the different shades of orange. With my other photos, I was experimenting. I like it when there's a bit of light shining on an object or person. I really like when my models stand underneath a light. It feels like you could see the darkness. For the Amazon notion photo I just loved the way it looked. It looks so lonely but there's just something about the name; it's as if it's saying 'look at me.' I just want to capture that.



Heidi Hernandez is a junior digital communications major. She is the vice president and lead layout editor for AM, the treasurer of the Hispanic Culture Club (HCC), and a barista at Starbucks.

Giselle Walter '23



Giselle Walter is a sophomore Communications and Art administration co-major. This is her second year as an AM photographer. She took last issue's shots of Club Vogue. Giselle loves fashion and fashion design, as well as marketing. At work she loves setting up the mannequins with outfits.



"My thought process for the photos were to make my outfit the main focus. I've recently gotten into alternative and goth fashion. I could never really afford it and I never had the confidence to try it out, but I did and now I love being known for my style now."



Olivia Hauser '22

Olivia Hauser is a junior English major with a religious studies minor.



Nature. Nature has always been creating art of its own. While the scenery changes with the seasons, nature's beauty does not change. Many art museums have had to close for a while to decrease exposure risk, but the outdoors has not closed and remains open to the public. These were photos taken during the summer of 2020, capturing some vibrant colors that the warmth brought forward.

Jonathan Leger '23



Jonathan Leger is a sophomore Accounting, Economics, and Finance major.



“For these photographs I chose to market a Canon Powershot SX45 to create awareness of the value of our powerful tool. Using nature as a background helped me set the perfect canvas to take photos of the camera. I think that giving value to the tools that we use is important because people pay more attention and respect to what comes out of the camera but not the camera itself.”



Introducing Your 2021-2022 AM Executive Board!



Derek Estrada '23
President



Heidi Hernandez '22
Vice President and Lead Layout Editor



Mia Hernandez '22
Secretary



Dallas Roberson '22
Treasurer / Social Media Chair



Dr. Heidi Mau
Faculty Advisor

**Thank you for your
commitment to
Waking Up the Arts!**



Photograph by Jada Weedon '23